

## 9

## Lakkhaṇa Sutta

The Discourse on the Marks | D 30/3:142-179

Theme: The 32 marks of the great man

Translated by Piya Tan ©2007, 2011

1 The human Buddha

**1.1 THE BUDDHA LOOKS LIKE MOST OTHER MONKS.** Let us first look at the early Buddhist texts for evidence on what the Buddha really looks like.<sup>1</sup> The Vinaya and the Suttas give us a clear impression that the Buddha looks very much like most other bona fide monks. Just as the Buddha has introduced the Vinaya and its rules, he keeps to them, too: “As I say, so I do; as I do, so I say.”<sup>2</sup> In other words, the Buddha keeps his head shaven, wears rag-ropes, and has nothing to do with pleasure and wealth, just like any other good monk.

Furthermore, there is clear evidence that, on many occasions, not everyone is able at once recognize the Buddha upon seeing him, as recounted in these discourses:

- (1) **the Sāmaññaphala Sutta** (D 2) records that Ajātasattu has to ask the physician Jīvaka which of the monks in the assembly is the Buddha (D 2.11/1:50);
- (2) **the Upakkilesa Sutta** (M 128) says that the park-keeper at the Eastern Bamboo Deer Park (Pācīna,vaṃsa(mīga)dāya) does not recognize the Buddha and stops him,<sup>3</sup> and
- (3) **the Dhātu,vibhaṅga Sutta** (M 140) records how the newly-renounced monk Pukkusāti recognizes the Buddha only after listening to him teaching (M 140/3:237-247).<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, the Buddha often speaks unequivocally on the supremacy of the Dharma, which even he himself holds above himself, such as in the teachings of **the Gārava Sutta** (S 6.2).<sup>5</sup> The early arhats, such as the elder **Lakuṇṭhaka Bhaddiya**, exhort us not to be misled by external appearances, but to give priority to the Dharma. [6.8]

**1.2 THE BUDDHA’S SPIRITUALITY AND THE MARKS.** At least three suttas attest to the significance of the *spiritual*, rather than the *physical*, character of the “great man” (*mahā,purisa*).<sup>6</sup> The “great man” concept is here not a prophetic or hagiographic ideology of a twofold destiny, that of worldly perfection or spiritual excellence and awakening,<sup>7</sup> but only of the latter. **The Vassakāra Sutta** (A 4.35) records the Buddha as giving to Vassa,kāra<sup>8</sup> the simplest definition of the great man, that is, he is learned, a good expositor of the meaning of what he has learned, he has a good memory, and he is skillful, industrious and expedient in his tasks.<sup>9</sup>

In **the Mahā,purisa Sutta** (S 47.11), the Buddha gives a meditative definition of the great man to Sāriputta, that is, he is one who dwells with the mind liberated through the practice of the four satipatthanas.<sup>10</sup> The most important canonical discussion on the “great man” is found in **the Anuruddha Mahā,vitakka Sutta** (A 8.30), wherein the Buddha teaches how proper mental reflections can bring about inner stillness leading to spiritual liberation (arhathood).<sup>11</sup> Interestingly, this teaching has nothing to do with the conception of the great man as depicted in the Lakkhaṇa Sutta.

<sup>1</sup> See “What the Buddha really looks like?” in **Revisioning Buddhism**, Singapore: The Minding Centre, 2011:52-54 (ch 17).

<sup>2</sup> D 2:224, 229, 3:135; M 1:108, 109; A 2:24; It 122; Sn 357 (Nigrodha,kappa); J 326/3:89.

<sup>3</sup> M 128.8/3:155 = SD 5.18. This account is also reported in the Chinese Ekottara’agama (T2.629b).

<sup>4</sup> Comy says that the Buddha concealed his 32 marks and 80 minor marks on that occasion (MA 5:46).

<sup>5</sup> S 6.2/1:138-140) = SD 12.3.

<sup>6</sup> See Endo 1997:139 f.

<sup>7</sup> This prophecy is given in **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.1.5/1:88 f & DA 249 f), **Mahā’padāna S** (D 14.1.31/2:16 & DA 442-445), **Sela S** (Sn p106 & SnA 2:449).

<sup>8</sup> Vassa,kāra is rajah Ajāta,sattu’s crafty Machiavellian minister whose subversive machinations led to the downfall of the Vajjī: see **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16.1.2-3/2:73 f) = SD 9.

<sup>9</sup> A 4.35/2:35-37.

<sup>10</sup> S 47.11/5:158. On the satipatthanas, see SD 13.

<sup>11</sup> A 8.30/4:228-235 = SD 19.15. See further **The body in Buddhism** = SD 29.6a(7): The Buddha’s body.

In other words, the Buddha has always emphasized on the *spirituality* of the “great man.” Historically, the Buddha has none of these superhuman marks, but his authenticity and spirituality are in no way diminished or affected. They are at best mythical marks of the fruits of his past good karma, as detailed in **the Lakkhaṇa Sutta** (D 30).<sup>12</sup> We will now examine how and why these marks arose.

## 2 The Lakkhaṇa Sutta and related texts

### 2.1 EARLIEST REFERENCES TO THE GREAT MAN’S MARKS

**2.1.1 Earliest lists.** The earliest sources of a full list of the thirty-two marks are the following suttas:<sup>13</sup>

- **the Lakkhaṇa Sutta** D 30.1.2-3/3:142-145 (Commentary: DA 3:919-939) = SD 36.9,<sup>14</sup>
- **the Mahā’padāna Sutta** D 14.1.32-33/2:16-19 (Commentary: DA 2:445-452)<sup>15</sup> = SD 49.8,<sup>16</sup>
- **the Brahmāyu Sutta** M 91.9/2:136 f (Commentary: MA 3:374-386) = SD 63.8,
- **the Mahā,vastu (Skt)** Mvst 1:226, 2:29.<sup>17</sup>

All these sutta passages on the 32 marks are preceded by details about the wheel-turner or universal monarch (*cakka,vatti*), followed by a prediction of his destiny, that is, he would become either a world monarch or a world renunciant, that is, the fully self-awakened one [1.2]. The 32 marks are *not* mentioned at all at this point. These passages on the universal monarch were probably composed or finalized during Asoka’s time in response to its imperial culture [2.1.3], but the tradition of the 32 marks probably went back earlier [3.1].

**The Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta** (D 26) gives an account of the universal monarch Daḷha,nemi and eight of his successors, climaxing with the advent of Metteyya Buddha. Although the Sutta lists the seven jewels [§2.2.4], which are the universal monarch’s regalia, there is *no* mention of the marks.<sup>18</sup>

**The Mahā Sudassana Sutta** (D 17), an extension to the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (D 16),<sup>19</sup> centres around Kusāvatī (ancient Kusinārā) and the universal monarch, Māha Sudassana.<sup>20</sup> Again here, although Mahā Sudassana is said to be a “head-anointed kshatriya rajah” (*rāja...khattiya muddhāvasitta*) who possesses the seven jewels (listed in full),<sup>21</sup> there is no mention of the marks at all.

<sup>12</sup> See also D:W (Walsh 1995): 610 n939.

<sup>13</sup> The 32 marks of the great man (*dva-t,tiṃsa mahā purisa,lakkhaṇa*). Chinese trs incl: Dīrghāgama (T1.5a-b); Madhyamāgama (T1.686.883c-884a) (partial tr); Saṅgha,bheda,vastu of the Mūla,sarvāstivāda (T24.108c-109a); also Dharma Saṅgraha §83. For nn on the 32 marks, see D:RD 2:14-16; Mvst:J 1:180-182; Lamotte (tr), *Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra*, 1:285-288. The order of the marks given in these refs sometimes differ, and either all or some of these marks also adorn the bodies of other persons. Other scholarly refs to the marks incl: E J Thomas, *The Life of Buddha as Legend and History*, 3rd ed 1949: 21, 38-43 (Asita), 218-226, 260; E Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, 1988a: 666-679.

<sup>14</sup> Partial Chinese tr: 三十二相經 MA 59 (T1.493a24-494b8). German tr K E Neumann, with corrections by Nyaponika, <http://palikanon.com/digha/d30.htm>.

<sup>15</sup> DA 2:445-452 (on Mahā’padāna S) and MA 3:374-386 (on Brahmāyu S) are almost identical [2.1.1, 3.2.2].

<sup>16</sup> Cf Mahā’vadāna Sūtra, ed Waldschmidt 101 f.

<sup>17</sup> A **Mahāsaṅghika** work (2<sup>nd</sup> cent CE), preserved in its Vinaya, a composite work, the earliest sections of which go back to 2<sup>nd</sup> cent BCE. It incorporates many short suttas and jatakas, linked to the core biography of the Buddha. It is in Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit, but without any translation in Chinese or Tibetan. See SD 36.2(7.1).

<sup>18</sup> D 26/3:58-79 = SD 36.10.

<sup>19</sup> D 16.5.17-18/2:146 f & SD 9(2). Cf ref there to “the celestial city of the devas,” **Āḷakamandā**, which could be Alexandria on the Indus, founded in 325. It is possible that the stories of Alexander the Great and his campaigns (334-323 BCE), was an inspiration for the ideology of the *cakka,vatti*, and to whom the 32 marks were later attributed [4.2.0].

<sup>20</sup> D 17/2:169-199 = SD 36.12.

<sup>21</sup> D 17.3/2:169 = SD 36.12.

It is clear that the purpose of such discourses is not so much the legitimization of the Buddha as a universal teacher, but memoranda to the emperor to practise *good governance*. It is likely that the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta and the Mahā Sudassana Sutta were compiled at a time when the tradition of the 32 marks was not yet known or not yet in vogue. These discourses, therefore, must be older than those that mention these marks.

**2.1.2 Earliest allusions.** Next, we have texts that allude to the 32 marks *without* listing them, and also *without* mentioning the twin destinies of the great man [1.2]. These texts are listed here with the experts regarding them or who attribute them to the Buddha:

• <b>Ambaṭṭha Sutta</b>	the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha	D 3.1.3/1:88	= SD 21.3,
• <b>Soṇadaṇḍa Sutta</b>	the brahmin Soṇa,daṇḍa	D 4.5/1:114	= SD 30.5, <sup>22</sup>
• <b>Brahm'āyu Sutta</b>	the brahmin youth Uttara	M 91.9/2:136 f	= SD 63.8,
• <b>Tikaṇṇa Sutta</b>	the brahmin Ti,kaṇṇa	A 3.58.1/1:163	= SD 85.2,
• <b>Nālaka Sutta</b>	the sage Kaṇha,siri	Sn 690,	
• <b>Pārāyana Vagga</b>	the brahmin Bāvaṛī	Sn 1000 (Vatthu,gāthā),	
• <b>Milinda,pañha</b>	brahmins Soṇ'uttara & Nāga,sena	Miln 8 [4.4.1].	

**The Mahā'padāna Sutta** (D 14) says that it is the brahmins, “skilled in signs,” who examine the body of prince Vipassī (a past Buddha) and determine that he has the 32 marks of the great man.<sup>23</sup> Another famous account, from the Commentaries, is found in **the Jātaka Nidāna**: eight of the 108 brahmins,<sup>24</sup> invited by the rajah Suddhodana to foresee the Bodhisattva's future, are Vedic sages and sign-readers. Seven of these augurs raise two fingers, prognosticating that the child Siddhattha would *either* become a universal monarch, if he lives the household life, *or* a universal teacher, if he renounces the world. Koṇḍañña, the youngest of them, however, raises only *one* finger and declares that the Bodhisattva would surely renounce the world to become a world teacher.<sup>25</sup>

A number of suttas records certain brahmin as doubting whether the Buddha is endowed with all of the 32 marks. The best known of such accounts are found in the Brahm'āyu Sutta (M 91), the Ambaṭṭha Sutta (D 3) and the Sela Sutta (M 92 = Sn 3.7)

The 32 marks are alluded to in **the Ambattha Sutta** (D 3), where it is stated that they form a part of Ambaṭṭha's education, and that they are found in the brahminical mantras.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, in the Buddhist hagiographies, it is a brahmin who ascertains the 32 marks of a Buddha.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, in **the Assalāyana Sutta** (M 93), the brahmin youth Assalāyana of Sāvattihī is said to be an expert on the marks.<sup>28</sup>

**The Sela Sutta** (M 92 = Sn 3.7) records the brahmin Sela knows of the twofold destinies of the sup-er-man with the 32 marks, and the Buddha declares that he is indeed “the supreme Dharma-rajah, the king of truth” who turns the irreversible Dharma,cakra, the wheel of truth (Sn 554).<sup>29</sup> This is probably an early effort to present the Buddha as the supreme individual outside of the secular state (headed by the emperor), that is, “the best of the two-legged” (A 1.13.5).<sup>30</sup> The “great man” evolved into an *ideology* in the backdrop of the rise of Indian imperialism, which is what we will examine next.

<sup>22</sup> Repeated at D 4.13/1:119 = SD 30.5.

<sup>23</sup> D 14.1.1/2:1 = SD 49.8.

<sup>24</sup> That is, Rāma (father of Uddaka Rāma,putta), Dhaja, Lakkhaṇa, Mantī, Koṇḍañña (youngest of these eight, but the eldest of the five monks), Bhoja, Suyāma, and Sudatta.

<sup>25</sup> J 1:55 f.

<sup>26</sup> D 3.1.3/1:88 = SD 21.3.

<sup>27</sup> For example, D 1:89, 114, 120; A 1:163; M 2:136; Sn 600, 1000.

<sup>28</sup> M 93.3/2:147 = SD 40a.2.

<sup>29</sup> M 92.17 = Sn 554/p109. See Lamotte's long n, 1944-80 I:275-276 n1.

<sup>30</sup> A 1.13.5/1:22. Koṇḍañña later becomes leader of the 5 monks and in due course is declared by the Buddha to be the eldest, “the foremost of long standing” (*rattaññū*) of the monks (A 1.23).

**2.1.3 Wheel-turner ideology.** The purpose of the “wheel-turner” ideology is clearly an attempt by the Indian Buddhist sangha to establish itself favourably in Asoka’s empire by recognizing or attributing to Asoka the status of “wheel-turner” or “universal monarch” (P *cakka,vatti*; Skt *cakra,varti*), and in doing so, to establish the Buddha (and also the sangha) as the universal teacher of the empire. This is indeed the most powerful statement that the sangha has made in entrenching itself in the world, that is, it marks the latest and final stage, the realization, of the ideologies of the wheel-turner and his 32 marks.

Such an ideology, one that effectively promotes Buddhism by way of the patronage of the powerful, such as the emperor, is clearly an attractive one [4.6.3]. When Buddhism spread beyond India, it brought with it the ideology of the wheel-turner, so that it became attractive to conquerors and rulers who wished to entrench themselves in the country.<sup>31</sup> Understandably, texts promoting such an ideology were translated into the local language, and incorporated in local Buddhist works, or even new texts were specially written to promote the ruler.<sup>32</sup> In fact, the ideology of the great man and his 32 marks was most developed by Mahāyāna theologians, who also introduced the 80 minor marks [4.2].

## 2.2 SUTTA SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS

**2.2.1 Overview.** The Lakkhaṇa Sutta opens with the Buddha giving a teaching unprompted [§1.1.1]. It is divided into three main parts, as follows:

- (1) Two two destinies. The teaching is on the 32 marks of the great man, the possessor of which would either become a wheel-turner or the supreme self-awakened Buddha [§§1.1.2-1.2.1].
- (2) The 32 marks are then listed as a summary or syllabus [§1.2.2], the two destinies are mentioned again [§1.3.1], followed by a listing of the seven jewels of the wheel-turner [§1.3.2].
- (3) Karmic roots of the 32 marks. The rest of the Sutta [§§1.4.1-2.32] deals with the 32 marks either singly or in sets of two or three. The format for each “mark” section is the same, thus:
  1. The mark/s are the result of past good deeds.
  2. The divine refrain: as a result of the good karma, the person is reborn in heaven.
  3. Falling from that heaven, he is reborn here with the mark or marks, which are then listed.
  4. The wheel-turner refrain lists the seven jewels, and his other benefits or qualities.
  5. The Buddha refrain lists the special quality or qualities.
  6. The verses.

The verses essentially elaborate on (1) and (2). It is likely that the verses are the original older strata, which were, in due course, prefaced with the prose introductions.

**2.2.2 Incongruencies.** **The prose and the verse sections** of part 3 do not always tally. For the 1<sup>st</sup> mark—“the feet with a level tread—for example, the prose section says that they were the karmic fruit of the great man having undertaken “unfaltering efforts in the purity of body, speech and mind by way of sharing gifts, undertaking the precepts, observing the precept-day [the uposatha], fulfilling duties, etc” [§1.4.1]. The verses seem to have summarized this, but adds “sense-guarded,...non-violent, harmless” [§1.6(1)].

Then again, the prose says that, as the Buddha, “he cannot be overcome, internally or externally, on account of greed, or hate, or delusion, by any enemy or adversary, nor by any recluse or brahmin, Māra or Brahmā, or by anyone in the world” [§2.26.4]. The verse section, however, seems to refer to the *present*, that “he is a king, unassailable, | leader of men, lord of humans, great in majesty, | like Indra himself... || Not by gandharvas, asuras, yakshas, rakshasas, | nor gods is ever defeated,...” [§2.17(3-4)], without any mention of Buddhahood.

Sometimes, the past karma does not seem to have any connection with the great-man mark it is supposed to bring about. For example, he is said to have gained the 8<sup>th</sup> mark—antelope-like legs—on account

<sup>31</sup> For a Chinese example of the empress Wū Zētiān (Wu-tse-t’ien), see **How Buddhism became Chinese** = SD 40b(5.2.2).

<sup>32</sup> Those Buddha biographies in Chinese translations that mention the 3 marks incl: \*Lalita,vistara, T3.496ab; Fang guang da zhuang ye jing, T3.557a; \*Kumāra,kuśala,phala,nidāna Sūtra, T3.692c-693a; \*Sama.datta,mahā.rāja Sūtra, T3.940bc. On the empress Wū Zētiān as Maitreya, for example, see **How Buddhism became Chinese** = SD 40b(5.2.2.2).

of having been a keen and quick student as “a reciter [speaker] in an art, a science, careful in conduct and action” [§1.22]. Again, his past karma of having been “a giver of fine and soft coverlets and cloaks of fine linen, of fine cotton, of fine silk and of fine wool” is a condition for his having the 11<sup>th</sup> mark, his golden skin. [§1.28.1]

### 3 The evolution of the “great man” and his marks

**3.1 EARLIEST REFERENCES TO THE “GREAT MAN” AND HIS MARKS.** In the earliest texts, the term “great man” (*mahā, purisa*) is used in an ethical sense to refer to an arhat, one whose mind is liberated (*vimutta, citta*).<sup>33</sup> There are at least two early suttas that deal fully with the “great man” (*mahā, purisa*), that is, **the Tissa Metteyya Māṇava Pucchā** (Sn 1040-42) and **the Mahā, purisa Sutta** (S 47.11).

The first text, the youth Tissa Metteyya’s question to the Buddha, is found in the ancient Pārāyana Vagga of the Sutta Nipāta (Sn 5.3). Although there seems to be five questions here by Tissa Metteyya, they all converge on the key one: “Whom do you call a great person?” The great man is defined here:

Who is contented in this world?  
for whom are there no mental agitations?  
is a thinker, who clings not to the middle?  
Who has gone beyond the seamstress<sup>34</sup> here?

(asks the venerable Tissa Metteyya,  
Who, knowing both ends [both extremes],  
**Whom do you call a great person?**

**1040**

(Metteyya, said the Blessed One,)  
after considering,<sup>35</sup> he is a quenched monk,  
**Him I call a great man—**

Who lives the holy life amidst sense-pleasures,  
with craving gone, ever mindful,  
a thinker who sticks not to the middle—  
he has gone beyond the seamstress here. **1041**

(Sn 1040-1042)<sup>36</sup>

**The Mahā Purisa Sutta** (S 47.11), a short but important discourse, defines the great man more broadly, in *meditative* terms, as one whose mind is liberated by the practice of the focusses of mindfulness.<sup>37</sup> In other words, the great man is one who practises meditation for the purpose of self-awakening.

Of special significance is **the Nalaka Sutta** (Sn 3.11), one of the earliest discourses on the Bodhisattva’s early life, which describes the sage Asita’s visit to the child Bodhisattva. The sage is said to be a *lakkhaṇa, manta, paragū*, “an expert in the marks and the mantras” (Sn 690b) without any elaboration. Significantly, he unequivocally declares that the child would become the Buddha in due course (Sn 693). However, no mention of the great man or the 32 marks is made at all.

#### 3.2 THE 32 MARKS: COMMENTARIAL AND LATER DEVELOPMENTS

**3.2.1 Late discourses.** **The Sutta Nipāta** is a mixed anthology of some of the oldest texts (especially those of the last two chapters, the Aṭṭhaka Vagga (ch 4 = Sn 766-975) and the Pārāyana Vagga (ch 5 = Sn 976-1149), and some very late works (such as the Ratana Sutta, Sn 222-238).<sup>38</sup> Its age is further attested by its having its own canonical commentary, the Niddesa.

<sup>33</sup> S 47.11/5:158; Sn 1040-1042; Dh 352. See D:RD 3:134 f; Endo 1997:139 f.

<sup>34</sup> “The seamstress” (*sibbani*) personifies craving (*taṇhā*) (A 3:399; Dhs 1059; NcA 10). The seamstress (or tailor) puts together clothing, just as craving brings together the conditions for one’s continued being and suffering.

<sup>35</sup> Ie after considering impermanence, etc (SnA 589 = NcA 10). Following the Suttas, *sankhāya* (abs) here better refers to mindful reflection by way of proper attention (*apassena*): see **Saṅgīti S** (D 33), where a monk lives supported by (*apassena*) considering what is to be habitually used (*paṭisevati*), what is to be endured (*adhivāseti*), what is to be avoided (*parivajjeti*), and what is to be removed (*vinodeti*) (D 33.1.11(8)/3:224). For details, see **Nalaka, -pāna S** (M 68.7/1:464) = SD 37.4. Cf D 3:279,1-5 & M 1:464,13-15.

<sup>36</sup> See **The body in Buddhism** = SD 29.6a (7.2).

<sup>37</sup> S 47.11/5:158 = SD 19.6. On the 4 focusses of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), see **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10) = SD 13.

<sup>38</sup> See K R Norman, “Pali literature,” 1983b:63-70.

**The Cūḷa Niddesa**, commenting on the Tissa Metteyya Mānava Pucchā (Sn 1040-1042), only gives a string of synonyms and near-synonyms of *mahā, purisa*, thus: *mahā, puriso agga, puriso seṭṭha, puriso vi-seṭṭha, puriso pāmokkha, puriso uttama, puriso padhāna, puriso* (the great person, the foremost person, the excellent person, the supreme person, the highest person, the main person).<sup>39</sup> This gives us a broader sense of *mahā, purisa*, and serves as a sort of mid-point between the early Buddhist definition of *mahā, purisa* as a saint of the path, especially an arhat, and the later commentarial and mythical definition, as a unique being who is destined to be either a world monarch or world teacher [1.2].

One of the late works in the Sutta Nipāta, **the Sela Sutta** (Sn 3.7), centering around the great man, is an account of the brahmin Sela who visits the Buddha to see if he has the 32 marks. This Sutta recurs in **the Majjhima** (M 92), and is also found in **the Thera.gāthā** (Tha 818-841) without the prose introduction, “which suggests that...the prose is not an original part of the sutta.”<sup>40</sup> Both the words *vyāñjana* (metri causa for *vyāñjana*) and *maha, purisa, lakkhaṇa* occur in the Sela Sutta (Sn 549 = Tha 819). It is interesting that the Thera.gāthā Commentary explains *vyāñjana* as a conventional term (*laddha, vohāra*) for physical qualities (*rūpa, guṇā*) of the 32 marks of the great man, such as the feet with a level tread, and the 80 minor marks, such as copper-coloured nails and prominent nails.<sup>41</sup> **The Lakkhaṇa Sutta** explains that these marks are *entirely the result of past good deeds*, and can only continue in the present life by means of current goodness. [6.1]

**3.2.2 Commentarial developments.** There are three major early commentaries on the 32 marks, that is, those in **the Sumaṅgala, vilāsinī**, the Dīgha commentary on the Mahā’padāna Sutta (D 14) and the Lakkhaṇa Sutta (D 30), and **the Papañca, sūdānī**, the Majjhima Commentary on the Brahmāyu Sutta (M 91) [2.1.1]. Of these three commentaries on the 32 marks, the most detailed is **DA 919-939**, on the Lakkhaṇa Sutta, while the other two are almost identical. Such details suggest a greater familiarity or evolution of the 32 marks ideology, further affirming that the Lakkhaṇa Sutta is a late work [4.2.4.2].

In the Commentaries, the word *mahā, purisa* refers to the Bodhisattva, that is, the Buddha before his awakening (from his first public aspiration for Buddhahood until the great awakening).<sup>42</sup> This is the sense *highlighted* in the Lakkhaṇa Sutta, which also declares the great man’s alternative destiny [1.2]. Thus, the Buddha’s position is inimitably enhanced and placed above any power in the world, secular or religious.

In due course, the commentarial tradition even locates the “32 marks” ideology to an early part of the Buddha’s ministry. The Sinhalese Buddhists, for example, have the well known nine-verse **Nara, sīha Gāthā**.<sup>43</sup> The oldest reference we have to this title and full set of verses is in the Jātaka Nidāna (introduction to the Jātaka Commentary), where it recounts how, during the Buddha’s first visit to Kapila, vatthu, Yasodharā (Rāhula, mātā) sings these qualities, in *ten* verses, to the young Rāhula (J 1:89 f). The first verse of the commentarial version is omitted from the Sinhalese version.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Nc:Be 34 = Nc:Se 41. The Cūḷa Niddesa Comy similarly merely gives the lexical meanings of these words in turn (NcA 10).

<sup>40</sup> Sn 548-573/p102-112 = M 92/2:101 (PTS refers to Sn); Tha 818-841. Norman 1983b:67.

<sup>41</sup> *Vyāñjanā ti laddha, vohārā supaṭṭhita, pādatādi battimsa, mahā, purisa, lakkhaṇa, saṅkhatā tamba, nakha, tuṅga, nakhatādi asīti anuṇṇana, saṅkhatā ca rūpa, guṇā* (ThaA 3:47). Comy here evidently takes *vyāñjana* as meaning a distinguishing mark in general, ie, both the 32 marks [4.1] and the 80 minor marks [4.2].

<sup>42</sup> DA 2:426-442, 3:920; MA 2:79, 3:67, 4:189; SA 1:322, 2:115, 117, 242; AA 1:145, 2:237, 237, 240, 4:76; DhA 1:81, 313, 2:45; SnA 1:184, 187 f, 223, 258, 357, 384, 392. On the list of mythical 32 “characteristics of the great man” (*mahā, purisa lakkhaṇa*), see SD 3.14(8)n.

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.ancient-buddhist-texts.net/Texts-and-Translations/Short-Pieces/Narasihagatha.htm>. According to **Bh Anandajoti** of Pulau Pinang, Malaysia (personal communication), it is “clearly late in metre, which is a fixed metre: *doḍhaka*), where each line is —○○—○○—○○—, where ○ is a short syllable, and — is long. The metre, he says, first appears in the late Kokāliya S (Sn 3.10). At best, we can date it from between 3<sup>rd</sup> cent BCE to 5<sup>th</sup> cent CE.

<sup>44</sup> The “ten verses of the lion-man” (*dasa nara, sīha gāthā*) are also mentioned at ApA 94, where only the first verse (from J 89) is mentioned with *ādi* (“etc”). The Vinaya Comy mentions that there are only “eight verses” (*nara, sīha, gāthāhi nāma aṭṭhahi gāthāhi*), without listing the verses (VA 5:1007). Hence, it is possible that the older verse

**3.2.3 Lists and later references.** Various sources<sup>45</sup> and scholars<sup>46</sup> have listed and commented on the 32 marks and the 80 lesser marks. The list of 80 lesser marks are found only in late Pali works and Sanskrit works.<sup>47</sup>

Among the post-Buddha and Mahāyāna texts that list or mention the 32 marks are the Mahāvastu, the Dharma,saṅgraha, the Abhidharma,dīpa Vibhāṣā,prabhā Vṛtti, the Mahā,vyutpatti, the Gaṇḍa,vyūha, the Lalita,vistara, and Nāgārjuna's Ratnā,vaṭī.<sup>48</sup>

### 3.3 POSSIBLE ROOTS OF THE CONCEPT

**3.3.1 Babylonian origin?** We can therefore conclude that the tradition of the 32 marks of the great man is neither brahminical nor early Buddhist. The question then arises, what is the source of the tradition? We do have some internal evidence that hint at its source. The Buddhist reciters attributed the tradition of the 32 marks to “the brahmins.” However, no such tradition could be found in any pre-Buddhist or contemporary brahminical work of the Buddha's time. It is possible that “brahmin” here refers to the ancient Babylonian priests.

One of the oldest Buddhist texts, **the Pārāyana Vagga**, found in the Sutta Nipāta, comprises sixteen questions asked by sixteen youths sent by the *brahmin* Bāvarī<sup>49</sup> to question the Buddha. It is possible that either Bāvarī was himself a Babylonian, or was familiar with Babylonian lore (such as the superhuman marks).

The questions of the 16 youths (*soḷasa pañha*) are very ancient, but the introduction, called the “story verses” (Vatthu Gāthā), were added much later, that is, after the Buddha's time. This introductory story relates how the brahmin Bāvarī sends these sixteen youths to verify whether the Buddha actually has all of the 32 marks (Sn 1000-1022).<sup>50</sup>

There is some suggestion that they may be Babylonian in origin: one of the early texts that features them (Pārāyana,vagga) speaks of a Brahman called “Bāvarī,” which is just the Pali spelling of “Babylonian”; marks and omens of all kinds are rampant in Babylon and related cultures. In addition, the 32 marks are closely connected with the idea that the Buddha is a “Great man,” who has to choose between spiritual and royal dominion. This choice is first expressed in the myth of Gilgamesh,<sup>51</sup> thousands of years before the Buddha, the most famous myth throughout the Babylonian region. (Sujato's blog, 6 Apr 2011)<sup>52</sup>

Historically, **Gilgamesh** was the fifth king of Uruk (modern-day Iraq and Kuwait) (Early Dynastic II, first dynasty of Uruk), reigning around 2500 BCE for 126 years. He is both a fierce warrior as well as a

had only only 8 verses. Moreover, it is unlikely that later versions would minus the number of verses. See H Bechert 1967 4.5.1.

<sup>45</sup> See BHSD 458-460 (for extensive refs to both pre-Mahāyāna and later sources); Strong 2001:42; John Powers 2009:235-339.

<sup>46</sup> Lamotte 1938:54\*-58\*; OKADA Yukihiro (extensive refs) 1989, 1990, 1991a, 1991b, 1996a, 1996b.

<sup>47</sup> Milinda Tīkā (MilnT 17 f). For the Skt names, see **Mahā,vyutpatti** (1965) (Mvyut), **Abhisamayālaṅkāra** (Abhsa 8 vv13-20); Lamotte's tr of Mahāyāna [Sūtra] Saṅgraha (Myss 1973 2:54\*-58\*).

<sup>48</sup> Mvst 2:226 f, 3:304 f, cf 2:158 f; Dhsg 83 f; Abhdp 188, 192; ArthvS §§26 f & Vīrya,śrīdatta's comy, ed Samtani, pp283-288; Mvyut 235.22 ff; Gaṇḍvy 399.30 ff; **Lalv** 105 ff: see de Jong 1954, Régamey 1973 (supplementary comments), Wayman 1957 (Tib); **Rtnvl** vv 76 ff. For comy details of each mark, see the tr text [§§1.4.1-2.31] ad loc.

<sup>49</sup> **Bāvarī** is a brahmin ascetic who leaves Sāvattihī for Dakkhīṇa,paṭha. He lives on the Godhāvārī bank, where his hermitage straddles the regions of Assaka and of Alaka. He spends all his fortune on a great sacrifice. Then a fierce brahmin comes along demanding 500 pieces of money from him. Failing to get anything, he curses Bāvarī that his head would split into seven pieces. It was out of fear that this curse might come true that the terrified Bāvarī sends the 16 youths to see the Buddha and question him (Sn 976-1148).

<sup>50</sup> On the problem of how they verified the “male organ” mark, see Miln 168 f; DA 275 f; MA 3:369; SnA 452.

<sup>51</sup> See **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17) @ Sd 36.12 (2.6).

<sup>52</sup> <http://sujato.wordpress.com/2011/04/06/on-the-32-marks/#comment-8859>.

lascivious man who impregnates brides before their husbands did. In due course, he is “tamed” through his close friendship with a “bull-man,” **Enkidu** (who is himself “civilized” by Shamhat, a beautiful temple harlot). They go through many adventures together. When later, Enkidu tragically dies, Gilgamesh desperately seeks eternal life not to suffer the same fate, but fails, and dies tragically, too.

Seals from Harappa (Indus valley in western India) suggest some influence from from Mesopotamia. Among these are the Gilgamesh motif of a man grappling with a pair of tigers and the bull-man Enkidu (a human with horns, tail, and rear hooves of a bull). Among the most interesting of the seals are those depicting a god or being seated in meditation posture. As such, Enkidu would serve as a better prototype of the 32 marks than Gilgamesh. Or perhaps, the marks echo the powers and prowess of the two good friends, combined into a single hero.<sup>53</sup> Even then, all this is purely conjectural, subject to confirmation by a closer study of this interesting problem.

**3.3.2 The marks not brahminical.** Despite claims in Buddhist literature that the 32 marks are closely associated with the brahmins,<sup>54</sup> surprisingly they do *not* appear at all in any extant Vedic or related text, or any pre-Buddhist text. As such, it is unlikely that the 32 marks were an early Buddhist conception.

The tradition probably had to do with post-Buddha political developments in ancient India. This idea that entered Buddhist literature, according to **Nakamura**, “perhaps under the influence of the ideal of the wheel-turner as it developed through the process of unification of India, extending from the late Nanda (fourth century BCE) to the Maurya dynasty period (317 BCE-c180 BCE).”<sup>55</sup>

As we have seen, there were a number of other reasons for the ideology of the 32 marks. Let us look at a few more conditions leading to their development.

**3.3.3 The “cosmic man.”** Another possible origin of the tradition of the 32 marks is the conception of *the cosmic man*, an idea that probably paralleled the rise of Indian mathematics. Centuries before the Buddha, for example, the *Śulba Sūtras* (literally, “Aphorisms of the Chords”) (c700-400 BCE), a set of texts written in Vedic Sanskrit, list rules for the construction of the sacrificial fire altars, which have different shapes but occupy the same space. These rules, as such, reflect a good understanding of mathematical proportions.<sup>56</sup>

Such a notion of mathematical proportions was also extended to the human form, which, closer to our times, is found in the vision of an ideal man as exemplified in the Vitruvian man.<sup>57</sup> With our present knowledge of the Buddhist texts and traditions, however, there is little more that we can say of this. [6.6]

**3.3.4 The Buddha’s display of the marks.** The ideal superman may not look very human if all the 32 marks were visible on him. For example, he is said to have flat feet, projecting heels, legs like those of an antelope’s, and while standing his arms are so long that he could easily rub both his knees at once. Indeed, he would look very grotesque indeed!<sup>58</sup> Of course, we could say that the Buddha does *not* exhibit the marks all the time, but could manifest any or all of these marks at will, showing them to whomever he wishes. The commentary to **the Dhātu Vibhaṅga Sutta** (M 140), for example, says that the Buddha conceals his 32 marks and 80 minor marks during his meeting with Pukkusāti (MA 5:46). [1.1]

<sup>53</sup> For refs, see Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gilgamesh>.

<sup>54</sup> We could conjecture that “brahmins” here refer to the Babylonians priests, from whom the ancient Buddhists learned of the marks, but no research has attested to such a theory as yet.

<sup>55</sup> Hajime Nakamura, *Gotama Buddha*, vol 1, 2000:75.

<sup>56</sup> According to Takao Hayashi (in “Indian Mathematics,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism*, 2005: 363), the *Śulba Sūtras* contain “the earliest extant verbal expression of the Pythagorean Theorem in the world, although it had already been known to the Old Babylonians.” For other refs, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian-mathematics>.

<sup>57</sup> The famous Vitruvian man was drawn by Leonardo da Vinci around 1492. It depicts a nude male figure in two superimposed positions with his arms and legs stretched apart and simultaneously inscribed in a circle and square. The drawing and text are sometimes called the Canon of Proportions or, less often, Proportions of Man. His ideas were in turn based on ideas of the correlations of ideal human proportions with geometry in Book III of the treatise *De Architectura* by the ancient Roman architect, Vitruvius. For refs: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vitruvian\\_Man](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vitruvian_Man).

<sup>58</sup> See D:W 610 n939.



We have already noted sutta accounts of people investigating these marks on the Buddha [2.1.2]. On the other hand, we also have sutta accounts showing that not everyone could at once recognize the Buddha on seeing him; for example,

- (1) **the Sāmaññaphala S** records that Ajātasattu has to ask Jīvaka which of the monks in the assembly is the Buddha (D 2.11/1:50);
- (2) **the Dhātu,vibhaṅga Sutta** (M 140/3:237-247) records how the monk Pukkusāti recognizes the Buddha only after discovering the similarities of the teachings that they profess (but MA here however says that the Buddha willfully hides his marks to avoid detection).

The point is that, even if the Buddha had none of these characteristics, his authenticity and spirituality are in no way affected or diminished, and that those characteristics should then be taken as a mythical symbolism of the fruits of his past good karma as detailed in **the Lakkhaṇa Sutta** (D 30).<sup>59</sup> **Malalasekera**, in his Dictionary of Pali Proper Names, remarks that

the marks are merely incidental; most of them are so absurd, considered as the marks of a human being, that they are probably mythological in origin, and a few of them seem to belong to solar myths, being adaptations to a man, of poetical epithets applied to the sun or even to the personification of human sacrifice. Some are characteristic of human beauty, and one or two may possibly be reminiscences of personal bodily peculiarities possessed by some great man, such as Gotama himself. (DPPN 2:534, sv Mahāpurisa)

#### 4 The nature and evolution of the 32 marks

**4.0** In this section we will first look at the list of the 32 marks and their past karmic conditions [4.1], and their evolution [4.2], and then see how the 32 marks and the 80 minor marks correspond [4.3]. The 32 marks continue to puzzle scholars to this day, and not all agree on their significance. **Rupert Gethin**, for example, proposes that these marks as described in the Pali texts refers to a “subtle body” of the Buddha “developed over many aeons by the practice of the perefctions” (1998:232). **James R Egge**, however, thinks that there is nothing in the Pali canon to suggest that they are anything by simply physical features of the Buddha’s body (2003:205 n16).

**4.1 THE BUDDHA’S 32 MARKS OF THE GREAT MAN.** The Buddha is said to be endowed with “the 32 marks of the great man” (*mahā, purisa, lakkhaṇa*) for having done specific good actions in the past, thus.<sup>60</sup>

<u>The 32 marks</u>	<u>Past karmic conditions (brackets refer to sets)</u>
(1) Feet with a level tread	great effort in wholesome deeds (1) [§1.4.1]
(2) Each sole of his feet have thousand-spoked-wheels, all rimmed and hubbed, perfect in every way	brought hapiness to the masses (2) [§1.7.1]
(3) Projecting heels	given up killing living beings (3+4+15) [§1.10.1]
(4) Long fingers	given up killing living beings (3+4+15) [§1.10.1]
(5) Soft, tender hands and feet	practised 4 bases of conciliation (5+6) [§1.16.1]
(6) Net-like hands and feet	practised 4 bases of conciliation (5+6) [§1.16.1]
(7) High-raised ankles	speaking Dharma-related words (7+14) [§1.19.1]
(8) Legs are like an antelope’s	a careful teacher in every way (8) [§1.22.1]
(9) Without stooping, able to touch and rub both his knees with both hands at once	concerned over masses’ welfare (19+9) [§2.1.1]

<sup>59</sup> The 32 marks are also listed in Abhisamayālaṅkāra, ch 8, vv 13-17, 1970:35 f. For a list of the karmic factors related to each mark, see the text below, and also P Harvey’s chart, *Routledge Ency of Buddhism*, 2007:100 f. E Bur-nouf discusses them in App VIII of his *Le Lotus de la bonne loi*, Paris: Maisonneuve, 1925 2:553-647.

<sup>60</sup> The past karmic conditions are given in §§1.4.1-2.31. For the Pali tt for each of these 32 marks, see the translated text, eg §122.

(10) Sheathed male organ	reunited lost relatives and friends	(10)	[\$1.31.1]
(11) A golden complexion	shows no anger, always calm	(11)	[\$1.18.1]
(12) Skin so delicate and smooth that neither dust nor dirt can settle on it	recluses and brahmins consulted him	(12)	[\$1.25.1]
(13) Single body-hair to a pore	given up false speech	(13+31)	[\$2.16.1]
(14) Upward-growing body-hairs, colly- rium-coloured, curling to the right	speaking Dharma-related words	(7+14)	[\$1.19.1]
(15) Brahma-like body, perfectly straight	given up killing living beings	(3+4+15)	[\$1.10.1]
(16) Seven convex surfaces (on his hands, feet, shoulders, and trunk)	gave exquisite, delicious food	(16)	[\$1.13.1]
(17) The front of his body is like a lion's	desirous of everyone's benefit	(17+18+20)	[\$2.4.1]
(18) No furrow between his shoulders	desirous of everyone's benefit	(17+18+20)	[\$2.4.1]
(19) Body proportions like a banyan tree: his arm-span equals his height	concerned over masses' welfare	(19+9)	[\$2.1.1]
(20) Evenly rounded shoulder curves	desirous of everyone's benefit	(17+18+20)	[\$2.4.1]
(21) A perfect sense of taste	habitually harmed no life	(29+30)	[\$2.7.1]
(22) His jaw is like a lion's	given up idle chatter	(19)	[\$225.1]
(23) Forty teeth	given up divisive speech	(23+25)	[\$2.19.1]
(24) Even teeth	given up wrong livelihood	(24+26)	[\$2.18.1]
(25) No spaces between his teeth	given up divisive speech	(23+25)	[\$2.19.1]
(26) Large and brilliantly white teeth	given up wrong livelihood	(24+26)	[\$2.18.1]
(27) Very long and large tongue	given up abusive speech	(27+28)	[\$2.22.1]
(28) Perfect voice (like Brahmā's), sweet like the sound of an Indian cuckoo	given up abusive speech	(27+28)	[\$2.22.1]
(29) Deep bluish-black eyes	never stared at others negatively	(29+30)	[\$2.10.1]
(30) Eye-lashes (long, shapely) like a cow's	never stared at others negatively	(29+30)	[\$2.10.1]
(31) White urna, soft like cotton-down	given up false speech	(13+31)	[\$2.16.1]
(32) Head shaped like a royal turban	wholesale leader of the masses	(32)	[\$2.13.1]

(D 14.1.32/2:17 f, 136 f; D 30.1.2.2/3:142-145)<sup>61</sup>

## 4.2 THE EVOLUTION OF THE MARKS

### 4.2.1 Three basic stages of development

4.2.1.1 ALEXANDER'S INFLUENCE? There is a strong possibility that the "great man" ideology was based on Alexander the Great, the greatest conqueror and king of all time. Physically, he had some of the 32 marks. The Greek biographer **Plutarch** (c45-120 CE) describes Alexander's appearance as follows: "Alexander had light skin, blond hair, and melting blue eyes. A sweet natural fragrance came from his body, so strong that it perfumed his clothes."<sup>62</sup> Another Greek historian, **Arrian** (Lucius Flavius Arrianus "Xenophon," c86-160) claim that Alexander, had heterochromia iridum, thus: "[T]he strong, handsome commander with one eye dark as the night and one blue as the sky." Both colours would be described as *nīla* in the texts.

Many statues of Alexander depict his body in a curved body posture (or contrapposto), with the gaze looking upward and outward.<sup>63</sup> While these signs might suggest physical deformities, it is also a traditional artistic convention of contrapposto often used by ancient and modern sculptors to signify grace, eleg-

<sup>61</sup> For later refs to the 32 marks, see (3.2.3).

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.e-classics.com/ALEXANDER.htm>.

<sup>63</sup> We see just such a posture in the Burmese depiction of the arhat **Upagupta**. See Oxford Dict of Buddhism, sv: <http://www.answers.com/topic/upagupta>; also John S Strong, *The Legend and Cult of Upagupta*, Princeton: Princeton Univ Press, 1992 (see cover for picture).

ance and social dominance.<sup>64</sup> These historians have noted that Alexander's father, Philip II, and his brother, Philip Arrhidaeus, might have had physical deformities, too, which made it possible that Alexander, too, had a congenital scoliotic disorder or familial neck and spinal deformity.

Often enough, when people have some kind of physical deformity, it is viewed as what sets them apart from others. Even today, traditional Indians would regard a deformed baby (say, born with two heads or faces) as some sort of divine intervention, blessing, or manifestation. The mist of time only deepens the mystique of past great men. As their stories are retold, they are embellished with new depths and details.

4.2.1.2 IMPERIAL INFLUENCES? In later Pali texts, we often see the Buddha having miraculous powers, but he is always regarded as a human being, albeit an *extraordinary* one, the best of beings, a “great man” [4.2.2]. The post-Buddha Buddhists had to come to terms with the Buddha's death, and those who could not accept it, began to see him as a *deified* being and attributed the 32 marks to him [4.6].

The early Commentaries, in an attempt to reconcile the Buddha's *humanity* with his *divinity*, claim that he could show or hide the 32 marks at will.<sup>65</sup> [3.3.4]. The Sarvāstivāda, on the other hand, saw him in wholly *divine* terms [4.2.3].

If the Theravāda conception of the wheel-turner arose in response to a soliciting of the support and advocating of the good governance to emperor Aśoka (Ashoka) (r 274-232 BCE), the ideology of the 32 marks and the 80 minor marks, on the other hand, were evidently formulated to win the support and favour of the Kuṣāna emperors (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries CE) [6.1]. After all, the “great man” is the most powerful of earthly beings, and the marks are his natural qualities.

**4.2.2 The Buddha's spiritual being.** Even in the early Buddhist texts, the Buddha's true nature is said to be unfathomable. **The Aggi Vaccha, gotta Sutta** (M 72), for example, records the Buddha as declaring that since he has transcended the five aggregates of clinging (form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness of the unawakened), he cannot be reckoned in those worldly terms, as such,

...he is profound, immeasurable, unfathomable as the great ocean so that

‘he arises’	does not apply,	
‘he does not arise’	does not apply,	
‘he both arises and does not arise’	does not apply,	
‘he neither arises nor not arise’	does not apply.	(M 72.20/1:487 f) = SD 6.15

In **the Aggañña Sutta** (D 27), the Buddha makes a similar statement but in a poetic manner, saying, “Vāseṭṭha, ‘the Dharma-body’ (*dhama, kāya*), this is a designation for the Tathagata.”<sup>66</sup> To express his affinity with the Dharma—that his mind and actions are completely in harmony with the Dharma—the Buddha declares, “He who sees Dharma, see me; he who sees me see the Dharma.”<sup>67</sup>

All this is *mystical language*, that is, spiritual experiences expressed on the level of words. Such words cannot be taken literally, but can only be fully understood through a similar experience. For the unawakened, such words are best understood as “poetic,” in the sense that they express a higher level of beauty and truth, and need to be explicated to the unawakened. Hence, **the Yamaka Sutta** records the Buddha as warning us through his admonition to the monk Yamaka,

When the Tathagata is not being apprehended by you as true and real here in this very life, is it fitting for you to declare:

<sup>64</sup> This is the kind of pose we see in the famous Venus de Milo, Michelangelo's statue of David, and in some Guanyin images.

<sup>65</sup> Such as during the first Buddha's meeting with Pukkusāti (M 140) [1.1], when he is said to have hidden his marks and assumed a normal appearance (MA 5:46).

<sup>66</sup> D 27.9/3:84 = SD 2.19.

<sup>67</sup> **Vakkali S**, S 22.87/3:120 = SD 8.8.

‘Avuso, when a Tathagata is describing a Tathagata—the highest person, the supreme person, the attainer of the supreme—he describes him apart from these four grounds:

the Tathagata	exists	after death, or
the Tathagata	does not exist	after death, or
the Tathagata	both exists and not exist	after death, or
the Tathagata	neither exists nor not exist	after death’?” (S 22.85/3:112) = SD 21.12

The true state of the Buddha or any awakened being cannot be properly defined in any worldly way. For, *language depends on words*, which in turn depend on *ideas* related to symbols and sounds. Even when we hear the same words, we each make our own sense of them without fully apprehending the full sense of they really mean. Awakening (*bodhi*), for the unawakened, is beyond words and thought.

The more philosophical amongst the monastics and scholarly in the after-centuries began to speculate on such statements. Philosophy, as *speculative thinking*, is clearly the antithesis of the meditative mind. To fully experience meditative bliss, we must arise above all philosophizing and speculating: we must put words and thoughts to a complete rest momentarily. Philosophy can be useful, after the fact, if it helps to clearly express the truth and beauty of our mental calm and clarity, so as to inspire others to directly taste the beautiful mind for themselves. Otherwise, philosophy may be a silver spoon, but it does not taste the soup.<sup>68</sup>

Philosophy, if its tools are only words and reasoning, may reduce our understanding of the Buddha to mere reasoning. The early Buddhist philosophers, taking the Buddha’s remarks of awakening on the *word* level, began to see him less as a human being. After all, the Buddha does declare that he is beyond any worldly categories. Moreover, the Buddha is believed to have such powers that enable him to manipulate even the elements, even to ascend to the highest heavens, and is free from all evil. He must surely be divine at least!

After the Buddha dies, even before the rise of the Mahāyāna, many amongst the unawakened saw him as a supreme being: they *apotheosized* him. He, as it were, pervades the whole universe in a magical way, like invisible radio or telecommunication waves, or internet signals. We can invoke him, as it were, with the right words (prayers), the right instruments (prayer implements), and the right technicians (the Mahāyāna priests). And he has a supernatural body, the Dharma Body. This is the doctrine of the Three Bodies (*tri, kāya*).<sup>69</sup>

**4.2.3 The Buddha’s physical characteristics.** Once the post-Buddha “supramundanists” saw him as a divine being, they understandably had to upgrade his human form to a divine one to fit this new Buddha image. As such, the Buddha, they claimed, was not really human but only appeared to be so. His physical body is only a projection (*nirmāṇa, kāya*) of a higher immanent reality. It was a *docetic* view of Buddhahood.<sup>70</sup>

The Mahāyāna Buddhist monk scholar, **Guang Xing**, in his PhD dissertation, *The Concept of the Buddha* (2005), proposes the thesis that the marks of the great man arose with the Mahāyāna notion of the “three bodies” (*tri, kāya*) of the Buddha, and developed in connection with the idea of the Buddha’s physical body (*rūpa, kāya*). He explains how four categories of the Buddha’s physical attributes developed in at least three stages. The four categories of the Buddha’s physical attributes are:

<sup>68</sup> Dh 64; **Udāyi-t,thera Vatthu**, DhA 5.5/2:31 f.

<sup>69</sup> See Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism, sv *trikāya*.

<sup>70</sup> Docetism refers to the view where the reality of a holy figure’s (here the Buddha’s) physical body was denied, “or at least various of the normal carnal properties and functions were refused in favor of those more spiritual or ethereal” (Macmillan Ency of Religion, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed 2004: docetism). The Buddha, in other word words, had only the appearance (Gk *dokesis*) of a human, and only seemed (*dokein*) to be a man. The main force behind such a belief here is the denial of the Buddha’s death. This is not a popular term in Buddhist studies today, but if we are dealing with the divinization of the Buddha, this can be a helpful term. See **How Buddhism became Chinese** = SD 40b.3(3.3.2).

- |  |                            |              |
|--|----------------------------|--------------|
| (1) the 32 marks of the great man (or “the major marks”) | <i>(battimsa lakkhaṇa)</i> | [4.1];       |
| (2) the 80 minor marks                                   | <i>(asīti anuvyañjana)</i> | [4.3];       |
| (3) a golden complexion                                  | <i>(suvanṇa,vaṇṇa)</i>     | [4.5.1]; and |
| (4) a fathom-wide halo (or “one-fathom halo”)            | <i>(vyāma-p, pabhā)</i>    | [4.5.2-3].   |

The 32 marks, as we have noted, appear in late strata of the Nikāyas and the Āgamas [3.2]. The 80 minor marks were added during the rise of the Avadāna literature;<sup>71</sup> and the golden complexion and fathom-wide halo were added to the list by the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE at the latest. (2005:25)

These four categories are mentioned by name (without any detail) in **the Milinda,pañha**<sup>72</sup> and its Chinese version, **the \*Nāgasena Bhikṣu Sūtra**.<sup>73</sup> Interestingly, the latter work is much shorter than the former, and corresponds to only pages 1-89, that is, only the first part, of the Pali version<sup>74</sup> [4.4.1]. Since scholars generally agree that this work was compiled in the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE,<sup>75</sup> we can safely conclude that these physical attributes of the Buddha had already been formulated by that time.

Guang Xing argues that these attributions were very likely introduced by the Sarvāstivāda,<sup>76</sup> whose main centre was in Kashmir, which was also the birthplace of the monk Nāgasena, who answers the Greek king Milinda’s questions.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, according to **N Dutt**, Nāgasena is referred to in the “Abhidharmakośa Vyākhyā as *pūrvaka sthavira*, as “early teacher” of the Sarvāstivāda.<sup>78</sup> The place-names of the texts and also king Menander himself were located in NW India (2005:26).

#### **4.2.4 The Buddha’s idealized physical form**

4.2.4.1 HOW THE BUDDHA OBTAINS THE MARKS. If the Buddha were a perfect divine being, then surely his physical form (*rūpa,kāya*), too, must be perfect. The Sarvāstivāda, like the more liberal Mahāsaṅghika,<sup>79</sup> idealized the Buddha’s physical body. The roots of this idea are already found in early Buddhism [2.1.1]; they were now given a divine touch. While the Pali suttas only regard the Buddha’s golden complexion [4.5.1] as extraordinary (*acchariya*) or miraculous (*abbhuta*), the Sarvāstivāda interpret it as a superhuman quality. While the Theravāda regards the Buddha’s aura as extending a fathom (the body’s

<sup>71</sup> **Apadāna**, one of the 15 books of the Khuddana Nikāya, uses the term *asītim anuvyañjanā* (“80 minor marks”), alongside mention of “the 80 noble marks” (*battimsa,vara,lakkhaṇa*) (Ap 122.3/1:156).

<sup>72</sup> See K R Norman 1983b:110-113.

<sup>73</sup> Miln 1:75; Nāgasena Bhikṣu S (T32.700c, 716a. See also P Demiéville, “Les versions chinoises du Milindapañha,” in BEFEO 24 1924:1-258; Guang Xing, “Nāgasena Bhikṣu Sutra: An annotated translation and study,” unpubl MPhil thesis, Univ of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, 1994: see *Nāgasena Bhikṣu Sūtra translation*, vol 1, Taiwan: Shyh Hyah International, 2008; & THICH Minh Chau, “Milindapañha and Nāgasena Bhikṣu Sūtra: A comparative study,” <http://www.buddhanet.net/budsas/ebud/milinda/ml-01.htm>.

<sup>74</sup> At the end of Miln 89, it says *Milinda.pañha.pucchā.visajjanā niṭṭhitā* (“Concluded are the questions and answers to Milinda’s questions”), which are also found in the Chinese tr, Nāgasena Bhikṣu S. This shows that Miln 2,23-89,16 form the original. According to scholars, such as K Mizuno (“On the recensions of Milindapañho,” in *Summary of the Research Studies of the Univ of Komazawa* 17 1959:54 f) & O von Hinuber (*A Handbook of Pāli Literature*, 1996:82-86), the Theravadins added this rest.

<sup>75</sup> **Menander** (Gk Menandros, r 155-130 BCE) was a Greek king who ruled Bactria (btw the Hindu Kush and the Amu Darya or Oxus river, and parts of NW India), now part of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan. **K R Norman** thinks Miln “must have been completed by the fifth century AD, since Buddhaghosa quotes from it” (1983b:110 f).

<sup>76</sup> We now have nearly a complete collection of the **Sarvāstivāda** sutras, thanks to a recent discovery in Afghanistan of roughly two-thirds of Dīrgha Āgama in Sanskrit. The Madhyam’āgama (T26) and Saṃyukt’āgama (T99) have long been available in Chinese translations. However, unlike the Theravāda, it has not all been preserved in their original language. See Bhikkhu Sujato, “The Pali Nikāyas and Chinese Āgamas”:

<http://sites.google.com/site/santipada/whatthebuddhareallytaught> & *A History of Mindfulness*, 2005:70-91 (ch 5).

<sup>77</sup> T32.704a.

<sup>78</sup> N Dutt, *Buddhist Sects in India*, 1978:135.

<sup>79</sup> Those who broke away from the “old” order some time after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Council (at Vesālī) and just before the 3<sup>rd</sup> Council (Pāṭali,putta) called themselves **Mahā,saṅghika** (“the great party”), and held liberal ideas, such as regarding the Buddha as divine, a belief that was esp developed in its branch called the Lokōttara,vāda (“the supermundane school”).

length) (*vyāma*) around [4.5.2], the Sarvāstivāda regard it as exceeding all worldly light, surpassing even the light of the Paranirmita,vaśavartin, the highest heaven of the sense-world.

Despite attributing the 32 marks to the Buddha, the Sarvāstivāda also insisted on the impurity of the physical form, since it is, after all, physical and worldly, even if it is a projected form. Indeed, such a body must be so well conjured up that worldlings would unquestioningly accept it to be like their own. The Sarvāstivāda now had to explain how the Buddha obtained these 32 marks.

According to **the Mahā Vibhāṣā Śāstra**,<sup>80</sup> opinions are divided on how these marks arose.<sup>81</sup> Some, for example, are recorded as saying that the 32 marks are caused by one thought but completed by many thoughts. Others said that each of the 32 marks is caused by a related wholesome thought. There was also disagreement on which of the marks appear first on the Buddha. The Śāstra, however, says that all the marks take one hundred “great aeons” (*mahā,kalpa*) or world cycles to be fully perfected. In our Buddha’s case, however, he takes only 91 world cycles due to his industry (T27.890b).

Some texts indicate that the marks are obtained sequentially, so that with the proper good karma, the related marks arise in the following life.<sup>82</sup> Once the Bodhisattva begins to cultivate the karma for these marks, he is “predestined,” and is reborn in good realms, with all his faculties intact, with the power of recalling past lives, will be a male, will never be a eunuch (*ṣaṇḍha*), or in any way physically deficient.<sup>83</sup>

4.2.4.2 THE MARKS OF A HUNDRED MERITS. For **the Sarvāstivāda**, each of the marks is the fruit of *a hundred merits*, which is the same as a hundred wholesome thoughts (that is, a hundred meritorious deeds).<sup>84</sup> Apparently, the Theravāda adopted this idea in the same connection, calling them “the marks of a hundred merits” (*sata,puñña,lakkhaṇa*). Historically, the expression is found in **the Lakkhaṇa Sutta** [§1.9(3)] in connection with “the boy with marks of a hundred merits.” This is, of course, a late expression, found only in a couple of other places in later books,<sup>85</sup> but mostly in the commentaries.<sup>86</sup>

The notion of “the marks of a hundred merits” is clearly not an original Pali idea, as it appears only a couple of times in the texts, and is explained only in the Pali commentaries. In fact, **the Buddha.vaṃsa commentary** explicitly rejects its Sarvāstivāda usage: “But some (*keci*) say that each mark is produced for every hundred meritorious deeds. Since, in which case, anyone may become a Buddha, it is rejected by the Commentaries.”<sup>87</sup> “Some” (*keci*) is an oblique reference to the Sarvāstivāda view.

The term “the marks of a hundred merits” occurs in Theravāda texts and Commentaries only in connection with the 32 marks. Due to its very rare occurrence in the texts, and that the Buddha,vaṃsa Commentary rejects the Sarvāstivāda interpretation of it, we can safely surmise that the Pali reciters had adopted the idea from the Sarvāstivāda. The reason for such an adoption must surely be that it was a popular and influential idea in northwest India and was catching on in the Theravāda areas.

**4.3 THE MAJOR AND MINOR MARKS.** The following table shows the relationship between the 32 marks and the 80 minor marks.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>80</sup> **Mahā,vibhāṣā Śāstra** (“great book of alternatives”) prob 3<sup>rd</sup> cent CE in Gandhāra under Kaniṣka II’s auspices, is a comy on the Jñāna,prasthāna, one of the 7 book of Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, and an encyclopaedia of Vaibhāṣika views, and those of distinguished teachers from different schools. See Oxford Dict of Buddhism: Mahāvibhāṣā.

<sup>81</sup> T27.887c-888a.

<sup>82</sup> Such as Pañca.viṃsati,sāhasrika,prajñā.pāramitā Śāstra, ed Nalinaksha Dutt, London: Luzac, 1934:69.

<sup>83</sup> Abhidharma,kośa 4.108b: (tr) Pruden 1988:690, (ed) Pradhan 1967:265.

<sup>84</sup> Abhidharma,kośa 4.110a: (tr) Pruden 1988:692, (ed) Pradhan 1967:266; T27.889c-890b.

<sup>85</sup> **Mahā Ratha Vimāna Vatthu** (Vv 1035d/97), where comy glosses as “the marks of the great man that have arisen by way of countless hundreds of merit” (*aneka,sata,puñña,vasena nibbatta,mahā.purisa,lakkhaṇam*, VvA 284); **Dhamma,ruciya-t,thera Apadāna** (Ap 487.21/2:430); Miln 111 (quoting DhA 1:147 = J 4:158).

<sup>86</sup> SA 1:336\*; SnA 1:239. More detailed comys at DA 3:925 & BA 32.

<sup>87</sup> *Keci pana satena satena puñña,kammena nibbatta,ek’ekeka,lakkhaṇo’ti, evaṃ sante yo koci buddho bhaveyyā ti aṭṭhakathāsu pakkhittam* (BA 32). See Endo 1997:156-163 & Guang Xing 2005:28.

<sup>88</sup> For refs to the 32 marks and the 80 minor marks, see (3.2.3).

## Collation of the 32 marks and the 80 minor marks of the great man

The 80 lesser signs column, partly based on Guang Xing's Table (2005:29-31)

### The 32 marks of the great man (Pali)

Mahā'padāna Sutta (D 14.1.32-33/2:16-19, 136 f),  
Lakkhaṇa Sutta (D 30.1.2-3/3:142-145) &  
Brahmāyu Sutta (M 91.9/2:136 f)

- (1) His feet has a level tread (*suppatiṭṭhita, pāda*)
- (2) His soles has wheels, each with a thousand spokes, all rimmed and hubbed, complete in every way (*heṭṭhā, pāda, talesu cakkāni jātāni honti sahasārāni sa, nemikāni sa, nābhikāni sabbā, kāra, paripūrāni*)
- (3) He has projecting heels (*āyata, paṇhi*)
- (4) He has long fingers (*dīgh'āṅguli*)
- (5) He has soft, tender hands and feet (*mudu, - taluna, hattha, pāda*)
- (6) His fingers and toes are net-like [reticulated, evenly spaced] (*jāla, hattha, pāda*)
- (7) His ankles are high-raised (*ussaṅkha, pāda*)
- (8) His legs are shapely like an antelope's (*eṇi, - jaṅgha*)
- (9) Without stooping, he can touch and rub his knees with both hands (*thitako 'va anonaman- to ubhohi pāṇitalehi*)
- (10) His male organ is covered with a sheath (*kos 'ohita, vattha, guyha*)
- (11) He has a golden complexion, with skin like gold (*suvaṇṇa, vaṇṇo hoti kañcana, sannibha- t, taca*)
- (12) His skin is so delicate and smooth that neither dust nor dirt settles on it (*sukhuma-c, chavi hoti, sukhumattā chaviyā rajo, jallaṃ kāye na upalimpati*)
- (13) His body-hairs are separate, one to a pore (*ek'eka, lomo hoti, ek'ekāni lomāni loma, - kūpesu jātāni*)

### The 80 minor marks (Sanskrit)

\*Mahā, prajñā, pāramitā Sūtra 大般若波羅蜜多經  
Dābōrēbōluómìduō jīng T6.968a-969a, Chinese tr  
Xuanzang, 659; MilnṬ 17 f; BHSD 34

- (10) even feet (*sama, pāda*)
- (43) fine hand lines (*snigdha, pāṇi, lekha*)
- (44) deep hand lines (*gambhīra, pāṇi, lekha*)
- (45) long hand lines (*āyata, pāṇi, lekha*)
- (80) the palms and soles marked with a cruciform flower, a swastika, a happiness diagram and a mystical figure (*śrīvatsa, svastika, nandyāvar- ta, vardhamāna* (or *lalita*) *pāṇi, pāda*)
- (1) copper-coloured nails (*tāmra, nakha*)
- (2) smooth nails (*snigdha, nakha*)
- (3) prominent [large] nails (*tuṅga, nakha*)
- (4) rounded nails (*vṛttāṅguli*)
- (5) slender fingers (*anupūrvāṅguli*)
- (6) well developed fingers (*citāṅguli*)
- (42) delicate hands like cotton (*tūla, sadrśa, suku- māra, pāṇi*)
- (7) concealed vents (*nigūḍha, śira*)
- (8) unknotted veins (*nirgrantha, śira*)
- (9) concealed ankles (*nigūḍha, gulpha*)
- (24) complete sex organs (*paripūrṇa, vyañjana*)

- (14) They grow upwards, bluish-black like collyrium, curling rightwise (*uddh,agga,lomo hoti, uddh,aggāni lomāni jātāni nīlāni añjana,vaṇṇāni kuṇḍalā,vaṭṭāni dakkhiṇā,vaṭṭaka,jātāni*)
- (15) His body is perfectly straight (like Brahmā's) (*brahm'uju,gatta*)
- (16) He has seven convex surfaces (on his hands, feet, shoulders, and trunk) (*satt'ussada*)
- (17) The front of his body is like a lion's (*sīha,-pubb'addha,kāya;*)
- (18) There is no furrow between his shoulders (*cit'antar'amsa*)
- (19) His proportions are like a banyan tree: his arm-span equals his height (*nigrodha,parimaṇḍalo hoti, yāvatakv-assa kāyo tāvatakv-assa vyāmo yāvatakv-assa vyāmo tāvatakv-assa kāyo*)
- (20) The curve of his shoulders is evenly rounded (*sama,vaṭṭa-k,khandha*)
- (21) He has a perfect sense of taste (*ras'agga-saggī*)
- (22) His jaw is like a lion's (*sīha,hanu*)
- (23) He has forty teeth (*cattālīsa,danta*)
- (24) His teeth are even (*sama,danta*)
- (25) There are no spaces between his teeth (they are perfectly close-set) (*aviraḷa,danta*)
- (26) His teeth are large and brilliantly white (*susukka,dāṭha*)
- (27) His tongue is very wide, long and flexible (able to touch his forehead) (*pahūta,jivha*)
- (28) His perfect voice (like Brahmā's) is sweet like the sound of a *karavīka* [Indian cuckoo] (*brahma-s,saro hoti karavīka,bhānī*)
- (29) His eyes are a deep bluish-black (*abhinīla,-netta*)
- (18) rounded body (*vr̥tta,gātra*)
- (19) smooth body (*mṛṣṭa,gātra*)
- (20) regular (slim) body (*anupūrva,gātra*)
- (21) pure body (*śuci,gātra*)
- (22) tender body (*mṛdu,gātra*)
- (23) stainless body (*viśuddha,gātra*)
- (41) body free from freckles and black spots (*vya-pagata,tila,kālaka,gātra*)
- (27) youthful body (*sukumāra,gātra*)
- (28) energetic body (*adīna,gātra*)
- (29) lofty body (*anutsanna,gātra*)
- (30) well-composed body (*susamhata,gātra*)
- (25) body has broad and graceful limbs (*pr̥thu,-cāru,jānu,maṇḍala*)
- (31) well-proportioned limbs and parts thereof (*suvibhaktāṅga,pratyaṅga*)
- (33) rounded sides of the body (*vr̥tta,kukṣi*)
- (34) smooth sides of the body (*mṛṣṭa,kukṣi*)
- (35) body-sides do not bulge (*abhugna,kukṣi*)
- (46) mouth not too elongated (*nātyāyata,vadana*)
- (47) mouth resembling a *bimba* fruit (*bimb'oṣṭha*)
- (53) rounded canine teeth (*vr̥tta,damṣṭra*)
- (54) sharp canine teeth (*tikṣṇa,damṣṭra*)
- (57) regular canine teeth (*anupūrva,damṣṭra*)
- (56) even canine teeth (*sama,damṣṭra*)
- (55) white canine teeth (*śukla,damṣṭra*)
- (48) pliable tongue (*mṛdu,jihvā*)
- (49) thin tongue (*tanu,jihvā*)
- (50) red tongue (*rakta,jihvā*)
- (51) voice of a roaring-elephant or thundering clouds (*gaja,garjita,jīmūta,ghoṣa*)
- (52) articulate, attractive and gentle speech (*madhura,cāru,mañju,svara*)
- (63) his eyes are beautiful like the white and dark lotus (the white and dark parts of his eye con-



- (30) His eye-lashes are (long and shapely) like a cow's (*go,pakhuma*)
- (31) The hair between his eye-brows is white soft like cotton-down (*uṇṇā bhamuk'antare jātā hoti, odātā mudu,tūla,sannibhā*)
- (32) His head is shaped like a royal turban (*uṇhīsa,sīsa*).
- (32) clear and pure sight (*vitimira,viśuddh'āloka*)
- (60) clear eyes (*viśuddha,netra*)
- (61) large eyes (*viśāla,netra*)
- (62) thick eye-lashes (*citra,pakṣma*)
- (64) long eye-brows (*āyata,bhrū*)
- (65) soft eye-brows (*ślakṣṇa,bhrū*)
- (66) even eye-brows (*sama,roma,bhrū*)
- (67) smooth eye-brows (*snigda,bhrū*)
- (11) gait of a lion (*simha,vikrānta,gāmin*)
- (12) gait of an elephant (*nāga,vikrānta,gāmin*)
- (13) gait of a swan (*haṃsa,vikrānta,gāmin*)
- (14) gait of a bull (*vṛsabha,vikrānta,gāmin*)
- (15) gait of swaying towards the right (*pradakṣiṇ'āvarta,vikrānta,gāmin*)
- (16) pleasing gait (*cāru,vikrānta,gāmin*)
- (17) steady gait (*avaktra,vikrānta,gāmin*)
- (36) slim abdomen (*kṣām'odara*)
- (37) deep navel (*gambhīra,nābhi*)
- (38) clockwise coiled navel (*(pra)dakṣiṇ'āvarta,-nābhi*)
- (58) prominent nose (*tuṅga.nāsa*)
- (59) clean nose (*śuci,nāsa*)
- (68) thick and long ears (*pīn'āyata,karṇa*)
- (69) even ears (*sama,karṇa*)
- (70) unimpaired hearing (*anupahata,karnēndriya*)
- (71) well-formed forehead (*supariṇata,laḷāta*)
- (72) broad forehead (*pṛthu,laḷāta*)
- (73) well-developed head (*suparipūrṇōttamāṅga*)
- (77) untousled head-hair (*asaṃlulīta,keśa*)
- (74) black hair like a black bee (in colour) (*bhramara,sadṛśa,keśa* or *asita,keśa*)
- (75) thick hair (*cita,keśa*)
- (76) soft hair (*ślakṣṇa,keśa*)
- (78) pliable hair (*a[aruṣa,keśa*)
- (79) fragrant hair (*surabhi,keśa*)
- (26) even pace (*sama,krama*)
- (39) agreeable in all respects (*samanta,prāsādikā*)
- (40) pure conduct (*śuci,samācāra*).

#### 4.4 BORROWED IDEAS

**4.4.1 The 80 minor marks are not canonical.** The 80 minor marks (*asīti anuvyañjana*) [4.3] are *not* found in early Buddhism, except in two late works, namely, **the Apadāna** (Ap 122.3/1:156), which mentions only the terms, “the 80 minor marks” (*asīti, vyañjana*), “the 32 noble marks” (*battimsa, vara, lakkhana*), “the fathom-wide halo” (*vyāma-p, pabhā*); and **the Buddha, vaṁsa** (B 21.27/81), which mentions only the term, “minor marks” (*anuvyañjana*), without listing them.<sup>89</sup> **The Milinda, pañha**, however, refers to the 32 marks, the 80 minor marks, his golden complexion, and the fathom-wide aura (Miln 75), but again not listing any of the marks. [4.2.3]

The Commentaries and later works, however, often mention the 80 minor marks. Even then, it is never listed in full, except in Milinda, pañha’s subcommentary, **the Milinda Ṭīkā**, which in turn quotes the Jinālaṅkāra Ṭīkā (or Jinālaṅkāra Vaṇṇanā)<sup>90</sup> (MilnṬ 17 f). This clearly suggests that the list was well known, at least *outside* Theravāda circles, popular enough for the Theravāda to see as disadvantageous in adopting it, too.

The minor marks are mentioned in the Chinese Āgamas, in **the \*Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra** (DĀ 1) and **the \*Aśoka Sūtra** (SĀ 604),<sup>91</sup> but they are clearly interpolations because they are not found in the Pali versions, nor are they mentioned in the other three independent Chinese versions.<sup>92</sup> **The Avataṁsaka Sūtra** has two chapters that further expand on these characteristics: chapter 29, on “The Ocean of Physical Characteristics” and chapter 30, “The Merit of the Light of the Buddha’s Minor Physical Characteristics.”<sup>93</sup> Étienne Lamotte, in his translation of **the Mahāyāna, saṅgraha**, gives a bibliography of the mentions of both the sets of major and minor marks in Buddhist literature (1973:54\*-58\*) [Biblio].

**4.4.2 The 80 minor marks are late.** A full list of the 80 minor marks primarily appears in Buddhist Sanskrit works such as **the Lalita, vistara**, **the Mahā, vastu** and **the Mahā, vyutpatti**.<sup>94</sup> In Pali literature, however, the full list is only found in the subcommentaries and later works, such as **the Milinda Ṭīkā** [4.3]. The reason that the 80 minor marks are only mentioned by name, and never listed in any way in the early Buddhist canon, is probably that these marks *were already well known by those times*, so that they are only fully listed as an afterthought, that is, it was learned that they were not listed in the older works at all.

The Mahāvibhāṣā explains the relationship between the major and the minor marks as that *the minor marks are already found amongst the major marks*, but “not mixed with them,” just as flowers in the forest make the trees distinctive.<sup>95</sup> In other words, the minor marks are related to the major ones, but are separate from the major marks, enhancing them.

#### 4.5 THE BUDDHA’S RADIANCE.

**4.5.1 Metaphor and myth.** Another reason attesting that these marks, major and minor, were *not* originally Theravāda teachings is related to its teaching of **the Buddha’s radiance**. The term “radiance” here refers to two important aspects of the Buddha’s appearance, namely, his golden complexion and his radiant aura. Here again, we will see that these characteristics were attributed to the Buddha rather late, and apparently as a result of Sarvāstivāda influence.

<sup>89</sup> Bu 1.37 however mentions “the wheel-mark on the foot” (*pādesu cakka, lakkhana*), one of the 32 marks, and “the flag, the thunder-bolt, the banner, with the decorative marks of the vardhamana (a food vessel), and the elephant-hook” (*dhaja, vajira, pātākā vaḍḍhamān’ankusācitam*), which are some of the tokens of the wheel-mark (Bu 1.37/4). These could be independent marks and tokens before the 32 marks or 80 minor marks were adopted. See §1.7.3n.

<sup>90</sup> JinalṬ Rangoon 1940:198. See G P Malalasekera, *The Pali Literature of Ceylon*, 1928:110 & Jinl, ed & tr James Gray, 1894 intro p8.

<sup>91</sup> \*Mahāparinirvāṇa S (DĀ 1 = T1.12b) & \*Aśoka S (SĀ 604 = T2.166c). See Guang Xing 2005: 32 f.

<sup>92</sup> Ie \*Buddha, parinirvāṇa Sūtra (T1.5), tr the monk Fazhu in Western Jin (265-317); \*Parinirvāṇa Sūtra (T1.6), tr unknown, Eastern Jin (317-420); and \*Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra (T1.7) tr Faxian (399-414),

<sup>93</sup> T9.601a-606c.

<sup>94</sup> Lalv (ed Vaidya) 75; 106 ff; Mvst (ed Senart) 2:43 f; Mahvyut 268 ff.

<sup>95</sup> T27.889a. See Guang Xing 2005:32.

What licenced such an adoption was clearly the Theravāda's close associating of light with the Buddha and his awakening. **The Dhammacakka-pavattana Sutta** (S 56.11), for example, describes the Buddha and his awakening in these famous words:

This noble truth that is the path leading to the ending of suffering' has been cultivated—thus, monks, with regard to things unheard of before, there arose in me *vision, knowledge, wisdom, insight and light*.  
(S 56.11.12/5:422) = SD 1.1<sup>96</sup>

The Buddha is thus well known<sup>97</sup> as “the light-maker” (*pabhaṅkara*),<sup>98</sup> and “the kinsman of the sun” (*ādicca, bandhu*).<sup>99</sup>

All this is metaphorical language, the way of symbols and imageries, referring to something abstract, but exhibited by the presence of the Buddha himself while he lives. With his passing, however, the living presence is no more, and only the metaphors are left.

Even in the discourses, we see the use of mythical language, such as in **the Acchariya Sutta 1** (A 4.127), where with the Buddha's advent, a universal radiance is said to have occurred, that is to say,

an infinite, glorious radiance manifests itself, surpassing even the divine glory of the gods themselves. Even the dark emptiness between worlds, the unfathomable darkness, the blinding darkness, where even the radiance of the moon and sun, mighty in power, glorious in majesty, cannot manifest themselves—even there an infinite, glorious radiance prevails, surpassing the divine majesty of the gods themselves. (A 4.127/2:130 f) = SD 36.15; D 14.1.17/2:12; cf M 123.7/3:120

Since the Buddha is a high-born kshatriya (noble) and the supremely awakened one, the early Buddhist reciters and hagiographers saw him as having a very attractive complexion. That the Buddha has a golden complexion (*suvanna, vaṇṇa*) is a popular Theravāda belief, but this is rarely mentioned in the Nikāyas. The most dramatic manifestation of this kind of radiance is recorded in **the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16) as the Buddha's transfiguration, that is, his body glowing with a dazzling radiance.<sup>100</sup> This is perhaps the earliest canonical reference we have of the Buddha's bodily radiance.

**4.5.2 Growing light.** Since light can travel great distances, the Buddha's radiance is envisioned as rays (*raṁsī*) beaming from his body. This radiance is called the “fathom-wide aura” (*vyāma-p, pabhā*). A “fathom” (*vyāma* or *byāma*) is the length spanned by both arms being extended to their full length (about 6 ft = 1.8 m), and is found only in the phrase *vyāma-p, pabha* or *byāma-p, pabhā*, referring to the Buddha's aura or halo.<sup>101</sup> We can see this radiance represented as a halo around Buddha images.<sup>102</sup>

Since light is made up of many colours, the Buddha's light appears in many colours, too, and the most spectacular of such a display, which only the Buddha is capable of displaying, is known as the twin wonder (*yamaka pāṭihāriya*). The Commentaries say that at the end of the first week after the awakening,

<sup>96</sup> A set of 5 discourses (A 4.141-145), speaks of the 4 kinds of light (*ābha, pabhā, ālokā, obhāsa, pajjota*), ie, those of the moon (*canda*), of the sun (*suriya*), of fire (*aggi*), and of wisdom (*paññā*) (A 2:139 f).

<sup>97</sup> See **Buddha as myth** = SD 36.2 (8.1).

<sup>98</sup> Sn 991d, 1136b.

<sup>99</sup> V 2:296; D 2:287; Sn 54; Ap 122.3/1:156 (“the noble conqueror shines like the sun,” ...*jina, varo ādicco va virocati*) [4.4.1].

<sup>100</sup> D 16.4.37/2:133 = SD 9.

<sup>101</sup> J 1:12, 90; Bu 1.45/4; Miln 75; BA 45; VvA 213. The fathom also applies to a person's height (or that of the Buddha's, as in the expression, “this fathom-long cadaver” (*vyāma, matte kaḷevare*), ie this body (S 2.26/1:62 = A 4.-45/2:48, 50) = SD 7.2 (see §9n).

<sup>102</sup> V 1:25; cf M 1:509, 511. In Western and modern religious art, the halo of light around a holy figure's head is called a “nimbus.” The circle of light around the body is called a “mandorla” (lit “almond” from its shape in Western religious art, but possibly related to the Skt *maṇḍala*). Such representations of holiness first appeared in Indian Buddhist art in the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE. It is believed that the motif was brought to the East by Alexander's Greek invaders.

the Buddha, to dispel the devas' doubt about his awakening, rises into the air and displays the twin wonder, where fine jets of fire and of water shoot out from each of his pores, dancing around his body, forming a magnificent mandorla around himself.<sup>103</sup> Technically, this miracle is an example of the Buddha's *transfiguration*.<sup>104</sup>

The light imagery is often found in stories of the Buddha in later canonical accounts. The Vinaya, for example, using the imagery of light and colours, recounts how the Buddha, after the awakening of the five monks, visits the matted-hair fire-worshipping ascetic, Uruvelā Kassapa, thus:

Then at the end of the night, the serpent's flames was extinguished, but the multicoloured rays (*accī*) of the one of supernatural powers (*iddhimata*) remained, and multicoloured flames, bluish-black, light orange-ochre, red, yellow and crystal were on the body of **Āṅgī,rasa** [whose body emits rays]. Having put the king of snakes into his bowl, he showed him to the brahmin (the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa). (V 1:25)

The Buddha's radiance evolved in due course into an aura of six colours (*cha-b,baṇṇa raṃsī*). The Buddha's aura or halo comprises the colours of the rainbow: red, orange, yellow, green, bluish-black, indigo, and violet. The ancient Buddhists perceived these colours emanating from the Buddha's body as bluish-black (*nīla*), yellow (*pīṭa*), red (*lohītaka*), light orange-ochre (*mañjeṭṭha/ka*), white (*odāta*) or crystal (*phalika*), and a composite of them (*pabhassara*). These colourful radiance is represented in a stylized form in traditional Buddha images or statues, as a stylized flame (*ketu,mālā*, "garland of rays") on its crown. Such a convention also distinguishes a Buddha image from that of a disciple.<sup>105</sup>

Other Buddhas (besides Gotama), too, have the same characteristic of bodily light. **The Buddha,-vaṃsa Commentary**, for example, gives this account of Kakusandha Buddha:

Then that man-eating yaksha, seeing that the sun ("day-maker") of sages (*muni,divasa,kara*) had arrived by a forest-path and was emitting *rays of the six hues* like the sun encircled by a rainbow, thought,

"He of the ten powers"<sup>106</sup> has come here out of compassion for me." (BA 254 = BA:H 362)

**4.5.3 Lights and colours.** In the next stage of evolution of the Buddha-light, the fathom-wide halo is seen as radiating even much farther. According to the Commentaries, the Buddha's bodily rays of light shine out to the distance of "eighty cubits" (*asīti hattha*)<sup>107</sup> in six directions, that is, the front (golden

<sup>103</sup> MA 2:184; UA 51; BA 8; J 1:77.

<sup>104</sup> See **Miracles** = SD 27.5 (2) (The transfiguration).

<sup>105</sup> For details, see eg, Endo 1997:146-156.

<sup>106</sup> "He of the ten powers," *dasa,bala* or more fully *dasa,bala,nāṇa*. The 10 powers are: (1) knowledge of the possible and the impossible (*jhānāṭṭhāna nāṇa*), such as in the analysis of karma (M 57, 135, 136), and the possibility regarding the realm, circumstances, time and effort, all of which would impede or reinforce the result; and also the cause of karma, etc; (2) knowledge of the result of karma (*kamma,vipāka nāṇa*); (3) knowledge of the way leading to all destinies and goals (*sabbattha,gāminī,paṭipadā*); (4) knowledge of the world with its various elements (*nānā,dhātu nāṇa*) (M 115.4-9/3:62 f); (5) knowledge of the different dispositions of beings (*nānādhimuttika nāṇa*); (6) knowledge of the maturity level of beings in terms of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom (*indriya,paropariyatta nāṇa*) (Vbh §§814-827); (7) knowledge of the defilements, cleansing and emergence in the cases of the meditations, liberations, concentrations and attainments (*jhān'ādi,saṅkiles'ādi nāṇa*); (8) knowledge of the recollection of (his own) past lives (*pubbe,nivāsānussati nāṇa*); (9) knowledge of the passing away and arising of beings (according to their karma) (*cutūpapāta nāṇa*); (10) knowledge of the destruction of the mental defilements (*āsava-k,khaya nāṇa*) (M 1:69; A 5:33; Vbh 336). See **Mahā Sihanāda S** (M 12.9-20/1:69-71) = SD 49.1 for details.

<sup>107</sup> A "cubit" (*hattha*, "hand") is the distance between the elbow and the middle-finger tip (ie the forearm) (J 1:34, 233), ie about 45 cm or 18 ins. 80 cubits is about 36 m or 118 ft (39.4 yd).

rays), the right (golden rays), the back (golden rays), the left (golden rays), above (bluish-black rays), and below (coral rays).<sup>108</sup>

The Abhidhamma Commentaries, however, give a different list of six bodily parts and their colours. **The Attha,sālinī** (the Dhamma,saṅgaṇī commentary), for example, says that the six colours first appear during *the fourth week* after the awakening, and they emanate from the Buddha's whole body; bluish-black (*nīla*) rays issue from his hair, beard and the bluish-black of his eyes; golden yellow (*pīṭa*) from the skin and the yellow portion of his eyes; red (*lohita*) from his flesh, blood and red parts of his eyes; white (*odāta*) from his bones, teeth and the white of his eyes; and crimson and a combination of all the colours (*mañjeṭṭha,pabhassara*) from different parts of his body.<sup>109</sup> [§2.10.3n]

Such discrepancies show that the ideas were still developing, and had not been normalized. Anyway, the rays were not only becoming more colourful, and they soon extended over a greater distance, even to a hundred leagues (*yojana*),<sup>110</sup> as this passage from the story of “the monks and the tree-spirits” in **the Dhammapada Commentary** attests:

He sent forth a luminous image of himself, and although *a hundred leagues away*, appearing to be seated face to face with them, present in visible form, diffusing six-coloured rays of light,<sup>111</sup> pronounced the following stanza...

(DhA 3.6/1:316, tr Burlingame, DhA:B 2:19)

The Dhammapada Commentary, in fact, records many occasions when the Buddha projected such a radiant or luminous image of himself (what we might today call a *hologram*) to give teachings, usually based on the Dhammapada verses.<sup>112</sup>

#### 4.6 REASONS FOR THE DEIFICATION OF THE BUDDHA

**4.6.1 Hypostasis and hyperbole.** While the Buddha lives, he would surely have rejected such fanciful imageries and grandiose attributions.<sup>113</sup> For, he regards the Dharma as being above even himself.<sup>114</sup> With the Buddha's passing, there is no more charismatic centre for the faith-inclined and unawakened to turn to. Those who are unable to accept the Buddha's impermanence and death<sup>115</sup> go on to hypostasize<sup>116</sup> such metaphors: the figures of speech are turned into *a speech of the figure*.

These metaphors have become hyperboles: the Buddha *becomes* the light (such as the “Buddha of boundless light,” Amitābha), and his radiance now is able to spread throughout the thousands of world systems, indeed, the whole cosmos. The myths have become “history,”<sup>117</sup> or more technically, hagiography, that is, inspiring, often fabulous, sacred biographies and narratives for the edification of the faith-

<sup>108</sup> These are respectively *suvanṇa* (golden), *mora,gīva* (“peacock's neck”) and *pavāḷa* (coral, ie a deep pink) (SA 3:47 = DA 3:972 = MA 3:21 f)

<sup>109</sup> DhA 13 f, 307; cf Vism 445; PmA 2:404. See Endo 1997:147-156.

<sup>110</sup> A *yojana* is the yoke of an Indian plough (J 6:38, 42). As distance, it is as far as can be covered by a yoke of oxen, ie, about 11.25 km or 7 mi (DhA 1:108, 2:13).

<sup>111</sup> Our Buddha's aura is said to extend to a fathom (*vyāma-p,pabhā*, J 1:12, 90; B 1:45; Miln 75; BA 297; VvA 213) all around. A *vyāma* or *byāma* is a “fathom,” here meaning the distance from the finger-tips of the two outstretched arms.

<sup>112</sup> DhA 1:259, 282, 316; 2:202 269 f, 275, 277; 3:9, 111, 166, 428; 4:53, 99, 118 f. **Pacalā S** (A 7.58) records the Buddha as *physically* teleporting himself and appearing before Moggallāna to instruct him on how to overcome his drowsiness while meditating (A 7.58/4:85-88) = SD 4.11.

<sup>113</sup> See eg the Buddha's def of “supreme worship” in **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16.5.3/2:138) & SD 9(7b).

<sup>114</sup> **Gārava S** (S 6.2/1:138-140) = SD 12.3.

<sup>115</sup> On the denial of the Buddha's death, see **How Buddhism became Chinese** = SD 40b(3.3.1).

<sup>116</sup> Hypostasis is a form of personification (Gk prosopopoeia), in which an abstract quality (such as compassion) is spoken of or taken to be human, eg “Compassion compels me to keep to the precepts.” Here, however, we are looking at an ontological (existential) level, eg, to take compassion as Avalokiteśvara or Guanyin, as an *existing* being.

<sup>117</sup> By this is meant that the *meaning* or significance of the myth is forgotten, and taken literally as statements or symbols of status and power, rather than pointing to personal growth and liberation. On the use and value of myths in spirituality, see **Myth in Buddhism** = SD 36.1.

ful and the reinforcement of the religion or the community. All this, as we have seen, of course, happens progressively.

These, however, are not the reasons for the idealization and deification of the Buddha: they are *the process* by which the Buddha becomes idealized and deified. One of the key reasons for such religious developments, as we have noted, is the fact that there are those who are *unable to accept the Buddha's death*<sup>118</sup> *and absence*, and who do not have a good grounding in Buddhist meditation. Through their needs and fears, they project or propagate ideas and stories of “living” Buddhas and various deified beings.<sup>119</sup>

**4.6.2 Psychological reason.** On a deeper level, there is a psychological reason for the later trend in the hypostasizing and deifying of the Buddha, and the creating and worshipping of new Buddhist deities and holy beings. While the Buddhist community was small, centred around the living Buddha, its members were constantly reminded and motivated to practise the Dharma, that is, to keep to the moral training, to mentally cultivate, and to work for realizing insight wisdom.<sup>120</sup>

As the Buddhist community grew larger, not everyone was determined to keep to proper Dharma practice and those with little or no learning and experience became Dharma spokesmen. With the passing of the Buddha, the tendency to *objectify* the Dharma, to take it merely as something to *know* and to be *measured* by, predominate. The Dharma has turned into *Buddhism*, and generally viewed as an academic subject or taken up as a lucrative livelihood, that is, something to master for the sake of worldly learning, a following, status and gains.<sup>121</sup>

Meditation, in other words, is ritualized (like religious prayer), pushed aside, or trivialized. Without a proper method of mental cultivation, it is difficult, if not impossible, to strengthen the mind, much less to speak of wholesome emotional independence.<sup>122</sup> Understandably, in such a milieu, spiritual doubt would be strong, even if academic learning and book knowledge of Buddhism is strong, especially in the face of personal and social difficulties. We might begin to have a better idea of problems, but yet feel less empowered to solve them. Fault-finding further cloud up our willingness and ability to think and act in any wholesome way.

Religious activities, daily lives and personal habits tend to be ritualistic, even *superstitious*, that is, we tend to seek answers in others and externally. As such, we tend to feel challenged by our past and inadequacies, and by the perceived success of others and other religions. We tend to measure ourselves against others, so that the Dharma has no priority in our lives. This measuring of self against others by way of things, success, status, and power, is called **conceit**. A big problem with conceit is that it tends to keep us stuck in our narrow mindset, and *lacking faith and confidence* in ourselves and in the goodness and genius of fellow Buddhists.

Rooted in doubt and conceit, we become spiritually weak, and so tend towards **individualism**. An individualist is one who *tries* to be different from others, so that they find it difficult to work *with* others. If such a trend dominates us, then it would hinder our social maturity. We become emotionally stunted. We might work in the name of Buddhism, even claim to promote it, but the reality is that we are simply promoting ourselves, our views, creating our own Buddhisms. Buddhism has become a drug on which we depend.

**4.6.3 Worldly realities.** Hajime Nakamura closes his *Gotama Buddha*, volume 2, by speaking of the political reasons for the deification of the Buddha. Between the Nanda dynasty (424-321 BCE) and

<sup>118</sup> Scholars generally accept the date of the Buddha's death as being within 20 years of 400 BCE either way. See R Gombrich, “Dating the Buddha: A red herring,” in (ed) H Bechert, *The Dating of the Historical Buddha*, pt 2, Göttingen, 1992:239-259.

<sup>119</sup> This is not a wholesale condemnation of any school or system of Buddhism, but the point here is that such innovations are beneficial where they lead to and promote wholesome mental cultivation, or at least, draw us away from self-view, superstition and spiritual doubt and inspire wholesome self-reliance and lovingkindness.

<sup>120</sup> On the 3 trainings (*ti, sikkhā*), see **Mahā, parinibbāna S** (D 16) @ SD 9(10d) & **Sīla Samādhi Paññā** = SD 21.6.

<sup>121</sup> See such prophetic discourses as **Anāgata Bhaya Ss 2+3** (A 5.79+80/3:105-110) = SD 1.10(3.3-4); cf S 16.2/-2:195 f, 17.3/2:226 f, 20.7/2266 f; Miln 401.

<sup>122</sup> See **Emotional independence** = SD 40a.8.

the Maurya dynasty (322-185 BCE) which conquered it, India grew politically stable and prosperous.<sup>123</sup> As a result, most of ancient India was unified as an empire, especially in the time of emperor Asoka (r 274-232 BCE). To win the support of the emperor and the powerful, the Buddhists introduced the ideology of the “universal monarch” (*cakka, vatti*), which is ingeniously and intimately linked to the ideal of the world renouncer, that is, the Buddha. **Nakamura** explains:

Like all inhabitants of India, Buddhists subscribed to this ideal, describing the Buddha as the religious version of the universal monarch. Deification is essentially an emphasis on greatness. Why the figure of Gotama lent itself to such magnification stems from his role as the people’s savior. He did not seek his own well-being; he liberated not only himself but others as well.<sup>124</sup> (2005:222)

The idea of the superhuman Buddha is linked with the doctrine of rebirth, that is, his appearance in the world is believed to be related to his accumulation of merit in past lives. Many legends about his past arose, for example, he is said to have been **Kappa**, a disciple of the Brahma Baka,<sup>125</sup> and also Jotipāla, a friend of the potter Ghāṭikāra during the Kassapa Buddha’s time.<sup>126</sup> Our Buddha, in other words, is able to recollect that he has lived numerous human lives before.

The discourses repeatedly present the Buddha as a wise and compassionate teacher, whose teachings and actions liberated people from suffering, turning them into true individuals who are the pillars of a healthy society. According to a poem in **the (Puñña) Mettā Sutta** (A 7.58a), the Buddha has not only prepared himself well for his Buddhahood, but also *often* lived as a glorious god in the heavens and as a wheel-turner himself here on earth:

- 4 See the wholesome fruit of the happiness-seeker’s merit!  
Having cultivated a lovingkind mind for seven years, bhikshus,  
After seven world-cycles of shrinking and expanding, I return not to this world.
- 5 When the world rolled back, I arrived in the Ābhassara world,  
when the world rolled open, I arrived in an empty Brahma world.
- 6 For seven times Mahā Brahmā, almighty, such was I,  
Thirty times I ruled as Sakra, lord of the devas.
- 7 A world monarch was I, the lord of Jambu,dvipa [the Rose-apple Continent],  
a head-anointed kshatriya, the overlord of men was I.
- 8 This world I conquered with neither rod nor sword,  
without violence, admonishing justly and harmoniously [impartially].
- 9 Justly I ruled this circle of the earth;  
families grew wealthy, great in wealth, great in enjoyment.
- 10 All sense-pleasures were fulfilled through the seven jewels—  
this the Buddhas has thoroughly taught to the world.
- 11 This, it is said, is the cause for becoming a great earth-ruler,  
abundant in wealth and means, a glorious king was I.

<sup>123</sup> For a brief survey, see Magadha: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magadha>.

<sup>124</sup> Eg “having crossed over, he leads others across” (*tiṇṇassa tāra,yantassa*), **Upāli S** (M 56.29(8)/1:385) = SD 27.1.

<sup>125</sup> **Brahmā Baka S**, S 578\*/6.4/1:144 = SD 11.6.

<sup>126</sup> **Ghāṭikāra S**, M 81/2:45-54 = SD 49.3; (**Gāthā**) **Ghāṭikāra S**, S 177-178\*/1.50/1:35 = SD 49.13.

- 12 Accomplished and famous was I as lord of Jambu,dvīpa:  
Who, hearing this, would not have faith [not be inspired], even the swarthy low-born?
- 13 Therefore, for those wishing for wellbeing, those yearning for greatness,  
should revere the True Teaching, recollect the Buddha's Teaching.

(A 7.58/4:89-91) = SD 4.11

## 5 The 32 marks: a medical evaluation

**5.1 ANCIENT INDIAN MEDICINE.** One of the most remarkable papers written in connection with the Lakkhaṇa Sutta must surely be **Oleg Daniel Bendz's** MA thesis, simply entitled "The Buddhalakshana" (2010), a short but illuminating comparative study on the 32 marks and structural pathology of the body. Bendz examines "the origin of these physical attributes by considering what is known of similarly described physical variations in humans (both congenital and acquired) and by examining the Sanskrit medical texts, such as the Bhela Saṃhita,<sup>127</sup> the Suśruta Saṃhita,<sup>128</sup> and the Caraka Saṃhita,<sup>129</sup> for description of these and similar attributes." (2010:ii).<sup>130</sup>

**The Caraka Saṃhita**, for example, says that after the new-born child's naming ceremony (on the fifth day), he should be examined for the marks of longevity. Over thirty such characteristics are mentioned, most of which are listed here in relation to the 32 marks (M) and 80 minor marks (m), namely:

<u>Physical sign or pathological symptom</u>	<u>Major mark or minor mark</u>
• discrete, soft, deep-rooted and black hairs	M13; m74, m76
• naturally well-endowed	m11-23, m25, m27-31, m33-35
• proportionate and umbrella-like head, broad, firm, even, united well with the temporals	M32; m71- 73
• corpulent, wrinkled, half-moon-shaped forehead	m71, m72
• ears thick, having large and even flaps, equal, elongated downwards depressed at the back, having compact tragus and big meatus	m68, m69
• eye-brows slightly hanging downwards, not joined together, even, compact and large	m64-67
• nose straight, with large nostrils, well-ridged, and slightly depressed at the tip	m58, m59
• mouth big, straight and having well-set teeth	M24, M25; m46, m47, m53-55
• tongue having sufficient length and breadth, smooth, thin and of normal colour	M27; m48-50
• voice profound, not poor, sweet, echoing, deep and patient	M28; m51, m52
• large jaw	M 22
• broad and well-developed chest	M17; cf m11
• distant breasts (broad chest)	M17

<sup>127</sup> The oldest Indian medical treatise extant, but incomplete and with much altered materials (early cents BCE).

<sup>128</sup> An ancient medical treatise by Suśruta (c350), dealing with complex procedures, incl cosmetic surgery. His original work is lost, and the extant work today is a later compilation.

<sup>129</sup> Prob written by Ḍṛdhabala, the extant work dates back to the Maurya period (3<sup>rd</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> cent BCE), and is the most ancient and authoritative of the Ayurveda medical tradition. See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charaka\\_Samhita](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charaka_Samhita).

<sup>130</sup> The work, however, would have been more useful if the refs to the Caraka Saṃhita and the Suśruta Saṃhita are given. The Devanagari characters are not always correct, and in fact, latin characters should have been used for easier reading. Furthermore, Bendz (Tables 1 & 2, 2010:23-29) uses the listings of rather dated works, ie, S Lefmann, *Lalita Vistara* (1902) & E Burnouf, *Le Lotus de Bonne Loi* (1852), while I have translated the list from those given in Lakkhaṇa S (D 30), MilnT 17f & BHSD 34.



• unbending and stable sides (straight frame)	M15	
• legs, arms, and fingers round, developed and long	M4, M5, M8; m10	
• hands and feet big and developed	M8; m42	
• nails stable, round, unctuous, coppery, high and tortoise-shaped	m1-6	
• navel whirled clock-wise and deep	m37, m38	
• waist 1/3 less than chest (in breadth), even, with well-developed muscles	cf m11	
• buttocks round, with firm and developed muscles, not too elevated	cf m12	
• thighs tapering downwards, round and well-developed	cf m13	
• shanks neither too corpulent nor too thin, resembling that of a deer's foot	cf m14	
• with hidden blood vessels, bones and joints	m7-9	
• ankles neither too corpulent nor too thin	M7	
• feet possessing the above features and tortoise-shaped	m10.	(Caraka Saṃhita 8.50) <sup>131</sup>

These parallellisms, even coincidences, here are very close and remarkable. The Caraka, in fact, goes back to Asoka's time, which was also the time when the Lakkhaṇa Sutta was probably composed or finalized. The early Buddhist monastics have a well-developed medical tradition, some details of which are recorded in **the Bhesajja Khandhaka** of the Vinaya.<sup>132</sup>

**The Sīvaka Sutta** (S 36.21), teaching that not everything is due to karma, lists eight causes of suffering.<sup>133</sup> These eight causes are a stock list found also in **the Samaṇa-m-acala Sutta 1**,<sup>134</sup> **the (Ābādhika) Giri-m-ānanda Sutta**<sup>135</sup> and **the (Samaṇa) Sukhumāla Sutta**.<sup>136</sup> In the last Sutta, one who is disease-free (*appābādha*) is said to be free from these eight causes. In **the Milinda,pañha** (Miln 134 f), Nāgasena discusses the 8 causes of suffering in the context of the Buddha's lack of moral vice. All this attests to the Buddha's knowledge of medicine and to the development of ancient Buddhist medicine.<sup>137</sup>

In this connection, we can propose two possibilities: either the Buddhists borrowed from the prevalent Indian medicinal tradition (if there were one) to formulate the set of 32 marks, or traditional Indian medicine arose from the medical and health teachings and practices of the early Buddhist monastics. There are more evidence for the latter and almost none for the former. [5.3]

## 5.2 THE MARKS AND HEALTH

**5.2.1 Pathological symptoms.** It is very interesting to examine these marks from the medical perspective,<sup>138</sup> as **O D Bendz** (2010) has done. He shows that a significant number of the 32 marks "can be shown to occur in various disorders and states of illness" (2010:9). In his paper, he says that a number of the marks are actually symptoms of bodily pathology.

<sup>131</sup> Such specifications and descriptions, in due course, form the bases for Buddhist iconometry: see C Wickramagamage 1990, sv Iconometry, in Ency Bsm 5:504-508. See also Sharma & Dash 1999: II.467; Cf Loon 2003:507.

<sup>132</sup> Mv 6 = V 1:199-252. See also Ency Bsm: Bhesajja & K G Zysk 199838-72.

<sup>133</sup> The 8 causes of illness and pain are: (1) bile disorders, (2) phlegm disorders, (3) wind disorders, (4) a combination, (5) weather change, (6) improper care, (7) assault (trauma), and (8) karmic results (S 36.21/4:230 f) = SD 5.6; cf Nm 370. See also Zysk 1998:30 f.

<sup>134</sup> A 4.87.5/2:87.

<sup>135</sup> A 10.60.7/5:110 = SD 15.11.

<sup>136</sup> A 5.104/3:131; cf Nm 370.

<sup>137</sup> See Macmillan Ency Bsm, sv Medicine & Oxford Ency Bsm, sv Medicine. For a website on traditional Buddhist medicine, incl a biblio, see <http://jivaka.net/>.

<sup>138</sup> Here the medical terminology used by Bendz has been simplified. For further details, such terms can be looked up in authoritative sites on the Internet.

A constellation of skeletal features (such as a long reach, long fingers, long legs, leg deformity, large jaw), skin characteristics (such as pigmentation (with dark bluish-black eyes), webbing of fingers, the seven prominences, hump between shoulders, rounded shoulders, and soft skin), glossal dysmorphism,<sup>139</sup> apparent underdevelopment of sexual organs, and hair growth quality and location, all suggest either a congenital aetiology (cause of illness) that may be interpreted as one or a combination of congenital connective tissue disorders, gonadal dysgenesis<sup>140</sup> with alteration of skeletal phenotype,<sup>141</sup> or endocrinopathy.<sup>142</sup>

This brings to mind acquired pituitary disorders (that is, endocrinopathies) such as acromegaly,<sup>143</sup> caused by a growth hormone elaborating neoplasm<sup>144</sup> of the anterior pituitary, which is associated with soft-tissue enlargement (90%), bony enlargement of the face (90%), oily skin and skin tags<sup>145</sup> (70%), neuromuscular dysfunction and myopathy<sup>146</sup> (50%), and other features, such as enlarged tongue.

Given the predominance of skin and skeletal items in the list of marks, Bendz suggests we consider the inherited connective tissue disorders as a category. Perhaps, the two commonest and most relevant groups of such disorders would be Ehlers-Danlos syndrome (EDS)<sup>147</sup> and Marfan syndrome (MFS).<sup>148</sup>

**Marfan syndrome** (MFS) is characterized by long, thin limbs (m14, m20)<sup>149</sup> in association with arachnodactyly (long digits, M4, m5). Persons with MFS also tend to have an upper body (top of the head to the pubic ramus) to lower body ratio that is less than two standard deviations from the norm for a given population, so that, with long arms and fingers, one can touch the knees when upright (M8). In addition, MFS is also characterized by protrusion of the chest (pectus carinatum, cf m11) as a result of rib overgrowth, a high-arched palate, high pedal arches and pes planus (flat-footedness, M1 and m10). Connective tissue defects may also affect cartilage, affecting his voice (M 28, m51-52), and extra-stretchable skin and webbing (M6). (Bendz 2010:12 f)

Another acquired endocrinal disorder worthy of consideration, say Bendz, is **Cushing syndrome**<sup>150</sup> or hypercortisolism—of which one cause is an anterior pituitary neoplasm<sup>151</sup> (that is, Cushing's disease) producing ACTH (adenocorticotrophic hormone)—resulting in various symptoms, but physically producing

<sup>139</sup> Malformation of the muscular tissue covered with mucous membrane in the mouth.

<sup>140</sup> Disorder of the reproductive system development/

<sup>141</sup> A phenotype is any observable characteristic or trait of an organism, resulting from the expression of an organism's genes as well as the influence of environmental factors and the interactions between the two. It is contrasted with the genotype of an organism, which is the inherited instructions it carries within its genetic code.

<sup>142</sup> Lit, a disease of an endocrine gland, ie, a hormone problem.

<sup>143</sup> Acromegaly is a disease caused by excessive quantities of growth hormone produced by the anterior pituitary gland, causing a slow enlargement of the hands, feet and jaws in adults. It is often accompanied by headache, muscle pain and emotional disturbances.

<sup>144</sup> Produces an abnormal new mass of tissue that serves no purpose.

<sup>145</sup> Skin tags are common, acquired, benign skin growths that look like a small piece of soft, hanging skin. See [http://www.medicinenet.com/skin\\_tag/article.htm](http://www.medicinenet.com/skin_tag/article.htm).

<sup>146</sup> Any disease of muscles not due to nerve dysfunction.

<sup>147</sup> Also called cutis elastica, a group of inherited an inherited connective tissue disorders, caused by a defect in the synthesis of collagen (a protein in connective tissue) characterized by articular hypermobility and hyperextensible skin. See <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0002439/> & [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ehlers%E2%80%93Danlos\\_syndrome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ehlers%E2%80%93Danlos_syndrome).

<sup>148</sup> Marfan syndrome, inherited or arising spontaneously, is a familial disorder of elastic connective tissue, characterized by aortic root dilatation and dissection, valvular insufficiency, lens dislocation, and arachnodactyly, among other findings. (“Familial” here means “related to the inability of a bodily part or organ to function normally.”) See <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0001455/>.

<sup>149</sup> The “m” (lower case) here refers to the “minor” 80 marks & “M” to the major or 32 marks. These correspondences have been normalized according to my own listings.

<sup>150</sup> Also called hypercortisolism, a disorder that occurs when your body is exposed to high levels of the hormone cortisol. It may also occur if you take too much cortisol or other steroid hormones See <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0001447/>.

<sup>151</sup> An abnormal new mass of tissue that serves no purpose.

hypertension, fat pads above the collar-bone (M16), a buffalo hump (a protuberance between the shoulder blades, M18), hirsutism (abnormal hair growth, M13, m75), purple striae<sup>152</sup> (conceivably perceived as spokes of a wheel, M2), proximal muscle weakness—that is, wasting of pelvic and shoulder girdle muscles (perhaps producing round thighs, M8). There is also a thinning of the skin (M12).

Furthermore, while generalized bronze-colored hyperpigmentation (unusual darkening of the skin) (M11) is characteristic of **Addison’s disease** (hypocortisolism), it has been observed in Cushing’s disease, too, and results in both cases from the stimulation of melanin production by ACTH and alpha-MSH.<sup>153</sup> Such a condition is not rare but tends to be underdiagnosed in its early stages. (2010:14 f)

Benz goes on to hazard possible implications of the various marks by way of a “diagnostic hypothesis by no means for the purpose of making any conclusions but for the sake of illustrating how such an exercise can be made to account for his observed physical peculiarities.”

The presence of congenital Marfan’s syndrome (MFS) and the presence of an acquired benign pituitary tumor elaborating either adenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH) or growth hormone (GH) with secondary acquired hypogonadism may be advanced to explain many of the observations made of the physical person of Buddha. (Benz 2010:18)

In this connection, we can collate some of the major and minor marks with certain pathological conditions, such as follows:<sup>154</sup>

- Marfan syndrome M1, M3-4, M6, M8-9, M17, M19, m5-6, m10, cf m11;
- scaphocephaly M32 (the shape of the head and cranial protuberance);
- benign ACTH-related tumor M5, M11-12, M16, M18, M31, M42, possibly M2;
- growth hormone disorder M3, M6, M16-17, M22, M27, m48; and
- secondary hypogonadism<sup>155</sup> M5, M10, m24, m42.

Thus far, we can, symptomatically, conjecture to relate the various constellations of the marks of a “great man” to certain pathological conditions.

**5.2.2 THE BUDDHA’S HEALTH.** A much more difficult question here is that of *why* such marks, many or most of which are pathological symptoms, are attributed to the Buddha’s person. After all, the early texts invariably present the Buddha as a man of an attractive physique and great health.<sup>156</sup> In fact, the Buddha lived a long life, spending most of his days actively teachings and interacting with others, and passing away at a ripe old age of 80.<sup>157</sup> Benz rightly cautions us that

while many of these abnormalities may be “explainable” by one or another disorder, it might be kept in mind that Buddha, if at all, had only one—or possibly, but less probably, only two—conditions to explain these phenotypic oddities. If one is interested in formulating a diagnosis, ascribing to him three such conditions would diminish that diagnostic likelihood by yet another order of magnitude. That is, he could not simultaneously have suffered from a dozen congenital metabolic disorders. It should be appreciated that formulating a diagnosis on such an incomplete inventory

<sup>152</sup> An off-colour stretch-mark on the skin.

<sup>153</sup> The melanocyte-stimulating hormones (collectively referred to as MSH or intermedins) are a class of peptide hormones that in nature are produced by cells in the intermediate lobe of the pituitary gland. An increase of in in human causes skin darkening.

<sup>154</sup> I have here assembled more items than Benz, and do not always concur with his list. As noted [5.1], Benz uses the listings of S Lefmann, *Lalita Vistara* (1902) & E Burnouf, *Le Lotus de Bonne Loi* (1852), while I have used the Lakkhaṇa S (D 30), MilnT 17f & BHSD 34.

<sup>155</sup> Hypogonadism is when the sex glands produce little or no hormones, here “from the local effects of the tumor” (Benz 2010:18).

<sup>156</sup> It is only in the Buddha’s later years that he is recorded as suffering from various bodily pains due to external causes (such as Devadatta’s attempts on his life) and to infirmity: see **How the saints feel** = SD 55.6 & **(Saṃyojana) Koṭṭhita S** = SD 28.4(3).

<sup>157</sup> **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16.2.25c/2:100 & 5.27/2:151\*) = SD 9.

of physical observations might be unrealistic, since there is a gaping absence of much information that is routinely acquired when assessing someone so afflicted. (2010:16)

In other words, with our current medical understanding of congenital deformities, endocrinopathies and other disorders, we know that it is almost impossible that a *single* person would have all such symptoms, and further to be endowed with such great wisdom and longevity as the Buddha was.

Moreover, the early reciters and biographers clearly had noble intentions in attributing the Buddha with such special and attractive characteristics. As **Sujato** notes, “Leaving a few of the bizarre elements aside, most of the marks are straightforward signs of physical beauty: black hair, white teeth, gold skin, and the like.”<sup>158</sup> Surely, their purpose must have been to make the Buddha stand out as a truly noble and unique individual, that is, as the marks of *the* great man, *the* superman.

## 6 Conclusions and reflections

### 6.1 LATENESS OF THE LAKKHAṆA SUTTA

**6.1.1 No origin story and an abrupt closing.** Structurally and historically, there are evidence that the Lakkhaṇa Sutta (D 30) is a late work, probably due to the influence of nascent Mahāyāna<sup>159</sup> spirit [4.2.1.2]. Structurally, the Lakkhaṇa Sutta is one of the few discourses that has no “origin story” or preamble (*nidāna*), that is, the Buddha’s reason for giving the teaching or the occasion behind it.

This point is especially significant because the Lakkhaṇa Sutta deals with mythical teachings: those of the 32 marks and the wheel-turner. It is the locus classicus for a study of the destinies of a “great man,” that is, a wheel-turning ruler (if he remains a man of the world) or a self-awakened Buddha (if he renounces the world).

In other mythical treatments of the Buddha’s teachings, such as **the Aggañña Sutta** (D 27) and **the Mahā Sudassana Sutta** (D 17), they always open with a clear origin story or expressly relate to one. The occasion for the Aggañña Sutta is the brahmins’ criticism of Vāseṭṭha and Bhara,dvāja for renouncing the world to join the order.<sup>160</sup> The Mahā Sudassana Sutta, on the other hand, is a full account of a brief statement made by the Buddha in the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta (D 16).<sup>161</sup>

For such a long account as the Lakkhaṇa Sutta, it has a rather abrupt ending, without any mention of its special effects on the audience. It closes simply with a stock remark that “The Blessed One said this. The monks joyfully approved of the Blessed One’s word.” Even then, this remark is only found in the Siamese and the PTS editions.

**6.1.2 Metrical evidence of lateness.** The Commentary quotes “the ancient elders” (*porāṇa therā*) as saying that the verses of Lakkhaṇa Sutta were inserted (*ṭhapitā*) by the elder Ānanda.<sup>162</sup> They, however, employ a very wide range of metres, especially ornate ones,<sup>163</sup> which are internal evidence of lateness. Early verses tend to be simpler and more consistent.

British philologist, **K R Norman**, notes that the Lakkhaṇa Sutta “shows a great variety of metres than any other canonical text, all of them being, moreover, either new classical types of metre or classical forms of old metres.”<sup>164</sup> The metres of the Sutta verses include Vamsasthā, Puṣpitaṅgrā, Rathoddhatā, Upasthitapracupita, Rucirā, Udgatā, and Pramitākṣarā.<sup>165</sup> In fact, its variety of metres is greater than any other

<sup>158</sup> Sujato’s blog, 6 Apr 2011 <http://sujato.wordpress.com/2011/04/06/on-the-32-marks/#comment-8859>.

<sup>159</sup> On the beginnings of the Mahāyāna, see **(Tathāgata) Acchariya S 1** (A 4.127) @ SD 36.15 esp (3.1).

<sup>160</sup> D 27.1-3/3:80 f = SD 2.19.

<sup>161</sup> D 16.5.17-18/2:146 f = SD 9; D 17.1.1-3/2:169-199 & SD 36.12 (1.2).

<sup>162</sup> *Etā pana gāthā porāṇaka-t, therā ānanda, therena ṭhapitā vaṇṇa, gāthā’ ti vatvā gatā* (DA 922,35 f).

<sup>163</sup> See K R Norman, 1971, 1987-88 & 1993.

<sup>164</sup> Norman 1983b:42, 1984:59, 1987-88:44; see Warder, *Pali Metre*, London: Pali text Soc, 1967: §135.

<sup>165</sup> In Pali, they are called Vamsasthā, Pupphitaggā, Rathoddhatā, Upasthitappacupita, Rucirā, Uggatā and Pami-takkharā; Norman 1983b:42 n64. On Pali metres & prosody, see **Anandajoti’s** website: <http://www.ancient-buddhist-texts.net/Textual-Studies/Outline/2-Outline-24.htm>. For more info on prosody, see <http://www.ancient-buddhist-texts.net/Textual-Studies/Outline/2-Outline-24.htm>.

canonical text. Indeed, so complex were these metres to the scribes, that they often made errors in transmission, so that the Lakkhaṇa Sutta has more corrupt readings than other suttas.<sup>166</sup>

**6.1.3 Mahāyāna trend?** The Lakkhaṇa Sutta theme, however, is an ancient one, that is, the supremacy of karma and moral virtue over birth. One is not born with the 32 marks: they were the results of past good karma, and the pre-conditions for present moral virtue and social beneficence. The marks go inseparably with the “great man” ideal [1.2; 4.1], which is another later Buddhist development.

Although the 32 marks are mentioned in a number of discourses in the Nikāyas [2.1.1], the Lakkhaṇa Sutta is the only one that links them to *specific* karmas. The past-life qualities that serves as the karmic conditions for each of the marks tend to be *social* virtues, such as

- §1.9(1) “a dispeller of the dangers of fear and terror” (*ubbega,uttāsa,bhayāpanūdano*);
- §1.9(1) “zealous in guarding, protecting and defending” (*guttūsu rakkhā’varaṇesu ussuko*);
- §1.10.1 “merciful, dwelled beneficial and compassionate to all living beings” (*dayāpanno sabba,-pāṇa,bhūta,hitānukampī vihāsi*);
- §2.13.1 “who had a share in giving” (*dāna,samvibhāgo*);
- §2.21(2) “he spoke to bring about unity amongst the divided” (*bhinnānusandhi,jananiṃ abhaṇi*);
- §2.31(1) “he lived for the good and happiness of the many” (*hitam api ca bahujana,sukhaṃ ca acari*).

A careful survey of such qualities will show that they are mostly socially-oriented, almost Bodhisattva-like in nature in putting others before self. Moreover, the fact that these virtues were expressly stated as having been done *in the past*, make them to be like the “perfections” (*pāramī*) of the Mahāyāna. We can see the *paramī* concept in its germinal stage.

**6.1.4 Prominence given to the wheel-turner.** Furthermore, we also see the Buddha here being intimately linked with the status of *a wheel-turner*, the most powerful of kings. While in the earlier suttas, the term “great man” (*mahā purisa*) has only a *spiritual* sense, that is, one who is a practitioner or a saint, especially an arhat [1.2], in the Lakkhaṇa Sutta and similar discourses relating to the universal monarch, its meaning shifts to that of the wheel-turner [2.1.3]. This is an important clue that gives us a good idea of the Sutta’s date, that is, it was composed or finalized during Asoka’s time (reigned 274-232 BCE) [4.2.1.2].

The 32 marks of the great man are neither found in any brahminical works nor in early suttas [3.3.1]. The 80 minor marks are even later still [4.3]. In fact, the Lakkhaṇa Sutta has only a partial parallel in the Chinese Āgamas,<sup>167</sup> that is, *without* the verses, whose metres are clearly late [6.1.2]. This suggests that the Sutta must have evolved over time, the earlier form of which did not have the verses.

This shift in emphases from the Buddha as an awakened teacher to a wheel-turner not only links him with the highest power of the land, the king or emperor, but since the Buddha is physically absent, he is being regarded as an *immanent* power that is embodied in the great man (the historical Buddha) as well as in superhumans (such as a king). It should be noted that the Bodhisattva is often depicted as a prince or some royalty.<sup>168</sup>

**6.1.5 Humanization of the Buddha.** Another important clue we have of the Sutta’s lateness is that even in the early after-centuries (up to the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE), the Buddha is never represented in human form in the stupa carvings or anywhere else. He is always depicted *aniconically*, that is, symbolically, for example, in this manner:<sup>169</sup>

[buddhist-texts.net/Textual-Studies/TS-index.htm](http://buddhist-texts.net/Textual-Studies/TS-index.htm). I thank **Bh Anandojoti** of Pulau Pinang, Malaysia, for the information here. See also N A Jayawickrama, “Gāthā,” 1990 (Ency Bsm) 5:312 f.

<sup>166</sup> Norman 1984:176.

<sup>167</sup> Partial Chinese tr: 三十二相經 MA 59 (T1.493a24-494b8), totally only about 100 lines. German tr K E Neumann, with corrections by Nyanaponika, <http://palikanon.com/digha/d30.htm>.

<sup>168</sup> In the Gaṇḍa,vyūha section of the Avatamsaka Sūtra, eg, we see the bodhisattva Dharma,mati enumerating the last 3 of the 10 stage (*daśa,bhūmi*) of Mahāyāna bodhisattvahood as those of “the prince-become” (*kumāra,bhūta*), “the crown-prince” (*yauva.rājya*) and “perfectly anointed” (*abhiṣeka,prāpta*): see Nattier 2005:123 f.

<sup>169</sup> See Klemens Karlsson, *Face to Face With the Absent Buddha*, Uppsala: Uppsala Univ Press, 2000 & [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aniconism\\_in\\_Buddhism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aniconism_in_Buddhism).

**Event in the Buddha's life**

the conception (Mahā Māyā's dream)  
 the nativity (the Buddha's birth)  
 the great renunciation  
 the great awakening  
 the first discourse on the Dharma  
 the Buddha's presence  
 the final passing-away

**Symbolism**

an elephant  
 a lotus flower  
 a riderless horse  
 an empty seat with two foot-prints under a bodhi-tree  
 a dharma-wheel  
 a trident (*triśula*)  
 a stupa

Human representations of the Buddha in sculpture (especially statues) and coinage first appeared in India in the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE in the Kuṣāṇa (Kushan) empire, under Kaniṣka I, in northwest India, through Greek influence (especially Gandhāra),<sup>170</sup> and in Mathura, in central north India, where a local tradition arose.<sup>171</sup> The Buddhist artists and sculptors, as in any religious art, had to abide by iconometric rules, some of which were based on the 32 marks or influenced by them.<sup>172</sup>

**6.2 OVERVIEW: REASONS FOR FORMULATING THE MARKS.** We have already noted how the tradition of the great man's marks is connected with Buddhist iconography [6.1]. In other words, the human representation of the Buddha could have necessitated the formulation of the marks. A human image of the sacred is more attractive than any aniconic representation of the Buddha, especially for those who have difficulty accepting his death [4.2.1.2; 4.6.1]. With a visually human image of the Buddha, worshippers have a more palpable link for their faith and a basis for emotional support [4.6].

Another important reality was that the post-Buddha Buddhists had to contend with the popularity and power of other religions, especially Brahmanism and Hinduism, which were highly imaginative in the representation of their gods and divinities, and often had the patronage of the powerful. The Buddhists responded by introducing their own iconography. Such borrowings were not unique to Buddhism, but was a phenomena common amongst all Indian religions, which even today continue to evolve as they come to terms with various challenges, such as those from non-Hindu religions and foreign enterprises.

One of the reasons for the decline of Buddhism in India was that it assimilated so much Hindu religiosity that it was easily reabsorbed into Hinduism in due course. The Hindus themselves, too, actively reacted to Buddhist evangelism and introduced new deities and spun new narratives to assimilate the Buddha into their system to win over the masses, and to attract wealth and influence.<sup>173</sup>

The attribution of the great man's marks to the Buddha effectively *deified* him. The deification of the Buddha was a vital evangelical strategy, because “[f]or merchants from outside India to understand Buddhism, Buddha needed to be a god, and piety had to bring more tangible benefits than nirvana.”<sup>174</sup> Mahāyāna texts such as the Lotus Sutra began to encourage and extol the offering of material gifts of jewels, perfumes, musical instruments to Buddha relics and stupas, claiming that those who made such gifts “have all of them reached enlightenment.”<sup>175</sup> Such promises of the gift of enlightenment and blessings to the wealthy and merchants understandably attracted wealth to Buddhist institutions and individuals.

The greater reality is that mainstream Buddhism has, as a rule, been supported by the wealthy and the powers of the times, which provide the worldly bases for its success. What better way is there for the Buddhist sangha to tap the imperial power than by introducing the ideology of the “great man” whose

<sup>170</sup> For info & biblio, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greco-Buddhism>.

<sup>171</sup> See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhist\\_art](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhist_art).

<sup>172</sup> The foll works discuss the marks in terms of various Buddhist plastic art forms: Foucher 1905:607-611, 1918: 284-312; Coomaraswamy 1928; Myer 1986:129-131; Moesteller 1988, Marasinghe 1994; however, cf Krishan 1966 esp 186 f (which rejects the textual accounts of the marks's are unrelated to artistic representations).

<sup>173</sup> See also **Miraculous stories** = SD 27.5b(1.4).

<sup>174</sup> Liu Xinryu, *The Silk Road in World History*, Oxford Univ Press, 2010:52.

<sup>175</sup> *The Saddharma-pundarīka*, tr H Kern, 1884, repr 1980:50 f, <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/lotus/lot02.htm>.

destiny is either that of the world monarch (which lionizes the emperor) or the world renouncer, the Buddha?<sup>176</sup> [1.2; 4.6.3]

**6.3 EARLY BUDDHISM AND INDIAN MEDICINE.** The Suttas and their commentaries often attribute the great man's marks to ancient brahminical texts, but they are not found in any extant brahminical works. **The Commentaries** seem to be aware of this, as they present us with this interesting explanation:

When the time comes for the the birth of a Buddha, the brahmins of the Pure Abodes visit the earth in the guise of brahmins and teach humans about their bodily marks as constituting a part of Vedic learning, so that in this way humans may recognize the Buddha. After his death, this knowledge disappears. That is why they do not exist in the Vedas.

(DA 1:249 = MA 3:364; SnA 2:448)

A myth often reflects a deeper reality or hidden truth. This commentarial myth about the gods introducing the 32 marks on earth actually points to a very significant development in Indian civilization—that of Ayurvedic medicine. We have compelling evidence that ancient Indian medicine arose with the Buddhist monastics [5.1]. The roots of the tradition of the 32 marks lay in the dawn of Indian medicine.

**Kenneth Zysk**, a Danish Indologist specializing in ancient Indian medicine, has shown, in his works, such as *Asceticism and Healing in Ancient India*, how Buddhism played a key role in the evolution of empirical medicine in India (1998:4, 11-70). The ancient Vedas (the oldest sections of which go back to 1500 BCE) make the earliest mention of diseases and healing, but they are only sporadic “healing in the Vedic hymns and incantations, focusing on demons of disease and their removal by means of exorcism” (2011: 1). The first systematic, empirical and effective Indian medical tradition arose in the ancient Buddhist monastic community.<sup>177</sup>

In due course, the Buddhist system was summarily *brahminized* into a lineage of heavenly and mythical Vedic transmitters. This brahminized lineage was made to go back to the god High God Brahmā, who passes the esoteric medical lore to Prajapatī, the Lord of Beings, who in turn passes it on to Indra, the leader of the gods, who then passes it on to the divine Dhanvantari, who appears in the form of Divodāsa, king of Kāśī (Benares), from whom Suśruta learns and transmits it to mankind in his Suśruta Saṁhita.

Indra, on his part, it is said, reveals the lore to the sage Bhāradvāja, who passes it on to other sages, including Ātreya Punarvasu, who trains six disciples, including Agniveśa and Bhela. Agniveśa composes a medical treatise which is reworked by his student Caraka, and later revised by Dṛdhabala into **the Caraka Saṁhita**. Bhela, too, records his master's teachings in **the Bhela Saṁhita**, which has come down to us only in corrupted fragments. All this is as far as the fascinating brahminical spin goes.<sup>178</sup>

The significant fact remains that Indian medicine was well rooted in early Buddhist monasticism. The questions now are: Did the tradition of the bodily marks *precede* the medical tradition, or was it the *result* of the medical tradition? It is highly unlikely that a belief in extraordinary bodily marks would be a motivational factor behind a medical tradition. It is more likely that certain ideas in the ancient medical lore were put together to envision a being of *physical perfection*. In other words, it was more likely that it was the ancient medical specialists who introduced the 32 marks, or initiated the idea. The Buddha is made the paragon of good health, physical and spiritual.<sup>179</sup>

**6.4 WHAT THE BUDDHA LOOKS LIKE.** We know, from the early Vinaya and suttas, that the Buddha looks just like any other *kāśāya*-wearing monk, shaven of hair and beard, so that some people often have difficulty in at once recognizing him [1.1]. Indeed, if the Buddha were to actually bear the 32 marks (not to mention the 80 minor marks)—such as his rounded physical frame, arms that could touch his knees while he is upright, and legs like an antelope's—he would look terribly odd!

<sup>176</sup> See Nakamura 2005:221 f.

<sup>177</sup> Dominik Wujastyk concurs: see his *The Roots of Āyurveda: Selections from Sanskrit Mediaeval Writings*, New Delhi: Penguin, 1998:2. See also Powers 2009:81.

<sup>178</sup> See Zysk 1998:4.

<sup>179</sup> See John Powers 2009:125-127.

Among the ancient Indians (as even people today, too), however, such exceptions to the rule seem to be regarded as characteristics that set their bearers apart from others, and since these characteristics are extraordinary, their bearers must surely be extraordinary, too. If holy people are those set apart from society on account of extraordinary qualities, these 32 marks certainly qualify in setting the Buddha apart as a unique supreme being.

How the Buddha *looks* does not have any significant impact on our spiritual development. Iconographic representations of the Buddha are merely means for helping us focus our minds towards inner calm and clarity, like road signs pointing in the right direction. Buddha images and Buddhist symbols should not be treated as fetishes (magical objects). They have no power of their own, except for what we attribute to them. Or better, whenever we anjali or bow before one another, we should visualize the Buddha image; for this reminds us of our potential for self-awakening.

**6.5 THE DEIFICATION OF THE BUDDHA.** Even amongst the Sarvāstivāda (mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE), an early pre-Mahāyāna school, maybe even earlier on, the Buddha's entire life-story was recast to depict a "new and improved Buddha."<sup>180</sup> Not only was his body perfect and immutable, but he was also almighty and all-knowing, transcending even the gods. He was awakened in the distant past, and his earthly existence was only a magical play and display for the benefit of all beings [4.2.3]. So they believed.

By the time of the rise of the Mahāyāna<sup>181</sup> (around the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE to the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE), the Buddha was fully deified or apotheosized: he was *literally* "God above the gods" (*devātideva*), an ancient term given a new theistic meaning. In the Mahāyāna imagination, for example, the Buddha could place an entire galaxy into a pore in his skin, and its inhabitants would be unaware of what had happened!

This passage from **the Amitābha Sūtra**, representing the Mahāyāna spirit at its height, depicts the Buddha's tongue as being long enough even to cover the whole universe!

Shariputra, as I am now commending the inestimably great benefits and virtues of Buddha Amitabha, there are in the east, in the south, in the west, in the north, above and below, Buddhas as numberless as the sands of the Ganges, each one seated in his own Buddha Field, each one with the long tongue of a Buddha which is able to embrace the three chiliocosms, announcing with all sincerity, "Living beings in all worlds, you should have confidence in this sutra, which all the Buddhas in the entire cosmos wholeheartedly commend and protect by recollection."<sup>182</sup>

Most informed Buddhists would take this statement *metaphorically* to mean that the Buddha's teaching is able to spread throughout the cosmos. Furthermore, Amitābha, when depicted as standing, is invariably shown to have long arms with his finger easily touching his knees.<sup>183</sup> The long arm of the Dharma is capable of touching any being in the universe.

Once the Buddha is viewed as a deity, there is no stopping to his glorification as transcending all other gods and God. Indeed, in late Mahāyāna and Tibetan traditions, he was apotheosized into *the* primordial deity, **the Ādi,buddha**, who is usually identified as Samantabhadra in Tibetan Buddhism, and from whose nature that both nirvana and samsara arise.<sup>184</sup> Such a teaching is, of course, not attested in

<sup>180</sup> An expression used by John Powers 2009:25.

<sup>181</sup> *Mahāyāna*, "the great vehicle," although often today applied to the schools of north and east Asia, properly refers to a major movement "embracing many schools in a sweeping reinterpretation of fundamental religious ideals, beliefs and values," giving emphasis to a broad world-engaged compassion and philosophically-driven wisdom. Those schools that later arose under the influence of the Mahāyāna spirit—such as Mādhyamaka and Yogācāra—were deeply philosophical. Other such schools tend to be acculturated, assuming many local beliefs and practices. In Nepal and Tibet, eg, the schools were deeply influenced by tantric practices and shamanism, while in China, they were strongly influenced by Confucianism and Daoism. This interaction, in turn, brought about Chan in China, which became Seon in Korea, and Zen in Japan. See sv Oxford Ency of Buddhism & Macmillan Ency of Buddhism.

<sup>182</sup> <http://www.plumvillage.org/practice/discourses/76-discourse-on-the-land-of-great-happiness.html>

<sup>183</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amit%C4%81bha>.

<sup>184</sup> On Ādi,buddha, see sv Ency Bsm & Oxford Ency of Bsm.



Indian Buddhism, but it signifies Buddhist theology reaching its imaginative peak, so that it is all things to all beings.<sup>185</sup>

## 6.6 THE SEXUALIZATION OF THE BUDDHA

**6.6.1 Sexuality in Buddha images.** Buddhist iconography—more specifically, the depiction of the Buddha in human form—are rooted in two ancient traditions, that is, the Gandhara Greek or hellenistic and the Mathura Kushan. Generally, the Gāndhāra Greek images (1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century CE) tend to depict the Buddha as a *divinized* or *ideal spiritual figure* based on the Greek aesthetic standards. As the hair is a vital mark of beauty, such images of the Buddha always depict him as having a full head of hair, which is wavy in a classical Greek way. Even the Buddha's robes are almost sensually pleated, a far cry from the monastic patched robes.

The Mathura images (late Kushan or early Gupta period, that is, 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century CE), on the other hand, presents the Buddha more as *an ideal human*. It is identifiable by a royal hair-knot (*uṇhisa*; Skt *uṣṇīṣa*) and spiralled or whorled hair called *kapardi*, “snail.”<sup>186</sup> Reflecting the imperial ambience, such images tend to depict the Buddha as a “great man” (*mahā, purisa*), one destined to be either a world monarch or a world teacher. A unique feature of such images is their prominent, or at least identifiable, depiction of *the male genitalia*. This is a display of male dominance, indeed of cosmic power, reflective of the wheel-turner's status. The Buddha, in other words, is represented as a universal king, a king of kings, a lord of life.

The uniqueness of the Gandhara Buddha images, on the other hand, is their prominent display of the “turban-like protuberance” (*uṇhisa*; Skt *uṣṇīṣa*). This superhuman mark is to depict the Buddha as above all other beings. It represents, as it were, his awakening, which makes him the highest of beings in all the worlds and heavens. Understandably, when the empires faded away, so did those masculine images of the Buddha fell out of vogue. Indeed, it is the divinized representation of the Buddha in the Gandhara tradition that continues to fascinate us to this day.<sup>187</sup>

**6.6.2 Sexual religion.** Religion in ancient India was dominated by men; it was patriarchal.<sup>188</sup> Understandably, it is not without difficulty that the Buddha accepts women into his monastic order.<sup>189</sup> Moreover, he has to ensure that sexuality does not smuggle itself into the monastic order, since to be a monastic is, by definition, to remain single and sexless, and to be a renunciant is to remain celibate and family-free. The rationale behind all this is that the Buddhist sangha<sup>190</sup> should be *a universal spiritual family* of single celibate renunciants “of the four directions,” one that is open to all who seek the path of spiritual liberation outside of the lay life. The monastic sangha (there is *no* lay “sangha”) is an antithesis to *the closed biological family, or class, or tribe*, which are sex-based or sensuality-dominated. On a bigger perspective, we as Buddhists are beholden to be emotionally healthy and to grow beyond our tribe, our biological family, beyond even our physical bodies, to be ever more unconditionally inclusive of others in our lives in a wholesome way; in short, to be better than being merely sexual bodies.<sup>191</sup>

After the Buddha, Indian Buddhism increasingly came under the influence of the popular ideas of sexuality<sup>192</sup> and Hindu Tantrism,<sup>193</sup> which viewed the male physique or ideal male beauty in terms of proportionality, such as “a rounded face and limbs; a physique that is symmetrically curved; and a decorous, restrained bearing.”<sup>194</sup> Understandably, the Buddha's body is regarded or represented as the ideal one.

<sup>185</sup> See Studholme 2002:45 f.

<sup>186</sup> See eg H Härtel, *The Concept of the Kapardin Buddha Type of Mathura*, in J Schotsmans & M Taddei (eds), *South Asian Archaeology 1983*, Naples, 1985:653-678.

<sup>187</sup> See M Taddei 1999.

<sup>188</sup> See eg Jeannine Auboyer, *Daily Life in Ancient India*, tr S W Taylor, London: Phoenix Press, 159-214 (ch 3).

<sup>189</sup> See **Dakkhiṇa Vibhaṅga S** (M 142) @ SD 1.9 Intro.

<sup>190</sup> On the proper use of the term *saṅgha*, see **Bad friendship** = SD 64.17(7.4.3.2).

<sup>191</sup> See esp **Saññoga S** (A 7.48/4:57-59) = SD 8.7.

<sup>192</sup> See **On women's inabilities** = SD 29.1b(2.4-5).

<sup>193</sup> On Tantric influence on Buddhism, see **Myth in Buddhism** = SD 36.1(1.8.2).

<sup>194</sup> John Powers 2009:10. Even in traditional medicine, the male body is the norm, 2009:125.

In the spirit of early Buddhism, however, the Buddha sitting in meditation is the ideal image of inner stillness. In the later Sanskrit poems on the Buddha's life, such as the *Lalita, vistara*<sup>195</sup> and the *Buddha, carita*,<sup>196</sup> however, we see the Bodhisattva (the Buddha-to-be) depicted as being sexually indulgent and the Buddha as being sexually attractive.<sup>197</sup> Sexualized Buddhism sees its climax in Tantric Buddhism, when, through influence of Śaivite Hinduism,<sup>198</sup> the Buddhas were each represented as having their own consort.<sup>199</sup> The Buddha in nirvana has been dragged back into the samsara, as it were!

**6.7 SUMMARY: THE EVOLUTION ON THE THE GREAT MAN AND HIS MARKS.** We can thus summarize the evolution of the “great man” (*mahā, purisa*), and his major marks (*lakkhana*) and minor marks (*anuvyañjana*), as follows (with tentative developmental time-periods):

(1) **5<sup>th</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> centuries BCE.** The early Buddhist texts use the term “**great man**” (*mahā, purisa*) in a *spiritual* sense, referring to a saint or to anyone diligently working towards sainthood [1; 3.1]

(2) **4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BCE.** Babylonian influence. The early Buddhists adopted a new vision of the great man as having certain *physical attributes* (such as a golden complexion and radiance), examples of which are found in some late Pali suttas or at their late strata. [3.2]

(3) **4<sup>th</sup> century BCE-2<sup>nd</sup> century CE.** Greek influence. Alexander the Great (campaigned 334-323) was probably the prototype of the Buddhist ideal of *the world conqueror* [4.2.1.1]. The influence of Greek anthropomorphism (human representation of the sacred) led to the rise of Buddha images in human form, in which connection **the 32 marks** were introduced by the Sarvāstivāda [6.1], leading to the deification of the Buddha by the Kuṣāṇa period (NW India, 1<sup>st</sup> century CE) [4.1].

(4) **3<sup>rd</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> centuries BCE.** Political influence. The sangha during the time of Asoka (r 274-232 BCE) introduced the ideology of the great man as one who is destined to be either *a world conqueror or a world renunciant* [2.1]—the aim of this is to win the favour of the rulers and the elite [4.6.3].

(5) **3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE-4<sup>th</sup> century CE.** Monastic medical tradition. The early monks, through their well-developed medical tradition [5.1], attributed *the marks of an ideal physical being* to the Buddha. The marks of the ideal body overlapping those of the 32 marks were adopted [4.2.4]. As the early monks had already attributed the Buddha with *a golden complexion* [4.5.1] and *a fathom-wide halo* [4.5.2-3], they easily incorporated the 32 marks into their own vision of the Buddha.

(6) **2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE-3<sup>rd</sup> century CE.** Sarvāstivāda influence. In the after-centuries, the early monks adopted the Sarvāstivāda ideas of the great man and his 32 marks, and compiled suttas reflecting this development or interpolated them into the available suttas (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries CE). [4.2.4, 4.5.1]

(7) **3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries.** The 80 minor marks [4.3] were added to the 32 marks. [4.4.1]

(8) **5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> centuries.** The 108 attending (*parivāra*) marks attributed to the Buddha's soles. [§1.7.3n]

(9) **1<sup>st</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries.** Deification of the Buddha developed under the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna. [6.5]

(10) **7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries.** The sexualization of the Buddha and Buddhism developed under Tantrism. [6.6]

<sup>195</sup> *Lalita, vistara* (“the elaborate sport”), an early Skt text, prob 1<sup>st</sup> cent CE, believed to be based on Sarvāstivāda material, which developed over time into its present form in 27 chapters. It depicts the Buddha in supernatural terms.

<sup>196</sup> *Buddha, carita* (“the acts of the Buddha”), composed by Aśva, ghoṣa around the 2<sup>nd</sup> cent CE, is a Sanskrit epic poem on the Buddha's life, regarded as the most beautiful of Skt poetical works. Its style is reverent and relatively free from fanciful hagiographical detail found in other sources.

<sup>197</sup> Serinity Young 2004: chs 1, 5; see Fig 2.7 (statue of future buddha Maitreya); John Powers 2009:26-28.

<sup>198</sup> Tantric Buddhism emerged as a distinct school around the 7<sup>th</sup> cent, amongst circle of unorthodox yogis based in present-day Orissa, Bengal, Gujarat and Kashmir. Sexual yogic teachings are found in such texts as the Guhya, -samāja Tantra and the Hevajra Tantra. The tradition was in due course introduced into the various great centres at Nālandā, Vikramaśīla, and Ratnagiri. Some of its methods in due course filtered into the Buddhism of Sri Lanka and SE Asia. For instructive comments, see John Powers, 2007:289-294.

<sup>199</sup> It should be noted that such practices are meant to be visualization practices under proper guidance. On Tantric consorts, see Serinity Young, *Courtesans and Tantric Consorts*, 2004. “In the Hevajra Tantra, he [the Buddha of the Tantrikas] proclaim: ‘I am the master with the thirty-two physical characteristics, the lord with the eighty secondary physical characteristics.’ He then adds, ‘I dwell in the vagina of women in Sukhāvātī, and my name is semen (*śukra*).’” (Quoted by J Powers 2009:204).

**6.8 HOW TO SEE THE BUDDHA.** The teaching that “attachment to rituals and vows” (*sīla-b, bata par-āmāsa*) is a fetter, preventing the attaining of streamwinning, is especially significant here. The Buddha Dharma is *not* about what the Buddha looks like, but is about *seeing the Dharma*. In such discourses as **the Gāraṇa Sutta** (S 6.2),<sup>200</sup> the Buddha admonishes us to see him through the Dharma, that is, he gives the Dharma the highest priority, over and above even in his own awakened life, and instructs us to do the same.<sup>201</sup>

The great saints, too, echo the Buddha’s teaching of *seeing* the Dharma, and not to be misled by external appearances. It helps here to reflect on these verses of the elder **Lakuṇṭhaka Bhaddiya** (“the dwarf”), who, though of deformed stature, has a beautiful voice:

- 469** Those people who have judged [measured]<sup>202</sup> me by appearance and who follow me by voice,<sup>203</sup> overcome by desire and passion, they know me not.
- 470** The foolish one, surrounded by mental hindrances, neither knows the inside nor sees the outside—he is indeed misled by voice.
- 471** Who knows not the inside, but sees the outside: seeing only external fruits, he, too, is misled by voice.
- 472** Who knows the inside, and sees the outside: seeing without obstructions, he is not misled by voice. (Tha 469-472 ≈ A 2:71)

To blindly resort to either a physicalized or a deified Buddha, and to turn our backs to Dharma training, is to resort to *superstition*, because such a view is based on ignorance and motivated by greed, hate, delusion or fear. Such a negative tendency is the basis for subhuman conduct, especially animal herd-like blindness and predictability and hell-like intolerance and violence.<sup>204</sup> The truest image of the Buddha or the Dharma is that of joyful inner stillness that is the basis for the wisdom of self-knowledge and lovingkindness for others.<sup>205</sup>

— — —

## The Discourse on the Marks

D 30/3:142-179

Thus have I heard.

**1.1.1** At one time the Blessed One was staying in Anātha,piṇḍika’s park on Jeta’s grove near Sāvathī.

There the Blessed One addressed the monks, “Bhikshus!”

“Bhante!” the monks replied to the Blessed One in assent.

The Blessed One said this:

### The great man (*mahā, purisa*)

**1.1.2 THE WHEEL-TURNING KING.** <sup>206</sup>“Bhikshus, there are these thirty-two marks of the great man. For, the great man endowed with them, there is only one of two destinies, no other.”<sup>207</sup>

<sup>200</sup> S 6.2/1:138-140) = SD 12.3.

<sup>201</sup> See **The teacher of the teaching?** = SD 3.14.

<sup>202</sup> “Have judged,” *pāmiṃsu*, lit “(they) measured.”

<sup>203</sup> “Who follow me by voice,” *ye ca ghosena anvagū*, alt tr “who follow me by my voice.”

<sup>204</sup> See eg (**Sāla, vatika**) **Lohicca S** (D 12.10/1:227 f) & SD 34.8 (4); **Devā, dūta S** (M 130.2b/3:178) = SD 2.23

<sup>205</sup> See also **The body in Buddhism** = SD 29.6a(7.4) “How not to look at the Buddha.”

<sup>206</sup> This is the open-quote whose end-quote is right at the very end of the discourse.

If he remains living a **house-life**, he becomes a wheel-turning king [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.<sup>208</sup>

These are **the seven jewels** (*satta ratana*), that is to say:<sup>209</sup>

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| (1) the wheel jewel,                    | <i>cakka,ratana</i>      |
| (2) the elephant jewel,                 | <i>hatthi,ratana</i>     |
| (3) the horse jewel,                    | <i>assa,ratana</i>       |
| (4) the gem jewel,                      | <i>maṇi,ratana</i>       |
| (5) the woman jewel,                    | <i>itthi,ratana</i>      |
| (6) the householder jewel, and          | <i>gaha.pati,ratana</i>  |
| (7) the commander jewel as the seventh. | <i>pariṇāyaka,ratana</i> |

More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.

He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.<sup>210</sup>

**1.1.3 THE SUPREME BUDDHA.** However, if he were to leave the house for **the homeless life**, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.<sup>211</sup> [143]

**1.2.1** And what, bhikshus, are these thirty-two marks of the great man, for which the great man, endowed with them, there is only one of two destinies, no other; that is, to say, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner, Dharma-rajah, conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels?<sup>212</sup>

These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh;*

*that more than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others;*

*that he dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword;*

*but, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

### The 32 marks of the great man (*dva-t,tiṃsa mahā,purisa lakkhaṇa*)

**1.2.2** Here, bhikshus,

- (1) the great man has feet with a level tread (*suppatiṭṭhita,pāda*). [§1.4.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man has *feet with a level tread*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.<sup>213</sup>

- (2) Furthermore, bhikshus, the soles of the great person's feet are wheels, each with a thousand spokes, all rimmed and hubbed, complete in every way.<sup>214</sup> [§1.7.1]

<sup>207</sup> This prophecy is given in **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.1.5/1:88 f & DA 249 f), **Mahā'padāna S** (D 14.1.31/2:16 & DA 442-445), **Sela S** (Sn p106 & SnA 2:449). **Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda S** (D 26) relates how the universal monarch Daḷha,nemi renounces the world in old age but is simply called "sage-king" (*rāj'isi*) (D 26.3/3:60) = SD 36.10.

<sup>208</sup> *Sace agāraṃ ajjhāvasati, rājā hoti cakka,vattī dhammiko dhamma,rājā cātura-anto vijitāvī janapada-t,thāvariya-p,patto satta,ratana,samannāgato*. This and the rest of the section is said of the Bodhisattva if he had not renounced the world: see **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.1.5/1:88 f) = SD 21.3.

<sup>209</sup> See **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.1.5/1:88 f) = **Mahāpadāna S** (D 14.1.31/2:16 f) = **Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda S** (D 26.2a/-3:59) = **Sela S** (Sn p106; cf SnA 450 = DA 1:250); for details, see **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17.1.7-17/2:172-177); cf Miln 37 f; Divy 467.012-016.

<sup>210</sup> *So imaṃ pathaviṃ sāgara,pariyantaṃ adaṇḍena asatthena dhammena abhivijīya ajjhāvasati*.

<sup>211</sup> *Sace kho pana agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajati, araham hoti sammā,sambuddho loke vivaṭṭa-c,chado*.

<sup>212</sup> Although the question mark is here, this whole para is actually the question.

<sup>213</sup> "is...a great man's mark of the great man," *mahā,purisassa mahā,purisa,lakkhaṇaṃ bhavati*. This is a technically accurate phrase, somewhat tautologous, is to ensure that what is meant is not just a "mark" but one of "a great man's mark."

<sup>214</sup> *Mahā,purisassa heṭṭhā,pāda,talesu cakkāni jātāni honti sahassārāni sa,nemikāni sa,nābhikāni sabbā,kāra,paripūrāni*.

Bhikshus, that *on the soles of the great person's feet are wheels, each with a thousand spokes, all rimmed and hubbed, complete in every way*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(3) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man has projecting heels (*āyata,paṇhi*). [§1.10.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man *has projecting heels*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(4) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man has long fingers (*dīgh'āṅguli*). [§1.10.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man has *long fingers*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(5) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man has soft, tender hands and feet (*mudu,taluna,hattha,pāda*). [§1.16.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man has *soft, tender hands and feet*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(6) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's hands and feet are net-like [reticulated, evenly spaced] (*jāla,hattha,pāda*). [§1.16.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *hands and feet are net-like*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(7) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's ankles are high-raised (*ussaṅkha,pāda*). [§1.19.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *ankles are high-raised*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(8) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's legs are like those of an antelope's (*eṇi,jaṅgha*). [§1.22.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *legs are like those of an antelope's*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(9) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man, without stooping, can touch and rub his knees with both hands at once.<sup>215</sup> [§2.1.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man, *without stooping, can touch and rub his knees with both hands at once*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(10) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's male organ is covered with a sheath (*kos'ohita,vattha,-guyha*). [§1.13.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *male organ is covered with a sheath*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(11) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man has a golden complexion, a gold-like skin (*suvaṇṇa,vaṇṇo hoti kañcana,sannibha-t,taca*). [§1.28.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man he has *a golden complexion, a gold-like skin*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(12) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's skin is so delicate and smooth that neither dust nor dirt can settle on it.<sup>216</sup> [§1.25.1] [144]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *skin is so delicate and smooth that neither dust nor dirt can settle on it*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(13) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's body-hairs are separate, one to a pore.<sup>217</sup> [§2.16.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *body-hairs are separate, one to a pore*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(14) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's body-hairs grow upwards, bluish-black like collyrium, curling to the right.<sup>218</sup> [§1.19.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *body-hairs grow upwards, bluish-black like collyrium, curling to the right*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

<sup>215</sup> *Thitako'va anonamanto ubhohi pāṇitalehi jaṅṅukāni parimasati parimajjati.*

<sup>216</sup> *Sukhuma-c,chavi hoti, sukhumattā chaviyā rajo,jallam kāye na upalimpati.*

<sup>217</sup> *Ek'eka,lomo hoti, ek'ekāni lomāni loma,kūpesu jātāni.*

<sup>218</sup> *Uddh'agga,lomo hoti uddh'aggāni lomāni jātāni nīlāni añjana,vaṇṇāni kuṇḍalā,vaṭṭāni dakkhiṇā,vaṭṭaka,jātāni.*

(15) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's body is perfectly straight (like Brahmā's) (*brahm'uju,-gatta*). [§1.10.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *body is perfectly straight (like Brahmā's)*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(16) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man has seven convex surfaces (on the hands, feet, shoulders, and trunk) (*satt'ussada*). [§1.13.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man *has seven convex surfaces*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(17) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's body-front is like a lion's (*sīha,puḅb'addha,kāya*). [§2.4.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *body-front is like a lion's*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(18) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man has no furrow between his shoulders (*cit'antar'amśa*). [§2.4.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man has *no furrow between his shoulders*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(19) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's proportions are like a banyan tree: his arm-span equals his height.<sup>219</sup> [§2.1.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *proportions are like a banyan tree—his arm-span equals his height—*this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(20) Furthermore, bhikshus, the curve of the great man's shoulders is evenly rounded (*sama,vaṭṭa-k,-khandha*). [§2.4.1]

Bhikshus, that *the curve of the great man's shoulders is evenly rounded*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(21) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man has a perfect sense of taste (*ras'agga-s-aggī*). [§2.7.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man has *a perfect sense of taste*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(22) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's jaw is like a lion's (*sīha,hanu*). [§2.25.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *jaw is like a lion's*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(23) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man has forty teeth (*cattālīsa,danta*). [§2.19.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man has *forty teeth*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(24) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's teeth are even (*sama,danta*). [§2.28.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *teeth are even*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(25) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man has no spaces between his teeth (*aviraḷa,danta*). [§2.19.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man has *no spaces between his teeth*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(26) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's teeth are large and brilliantly white [bright] (*susukka,-dāṭha*). [§2.28.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *teeth are large and brilliantly white*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(27) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's tongue is very long and large (able to touch his forehead) (*pahūta,jivha*). [§2.22.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *tongue is very long and large*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(28) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man has a perfect voice (like Brahmā's) is sweet like the sound of a *karavīka* [Indian cuckoo] (*brahma-s,saro hoti karavīka,bhāṇī*). [§2.22.1]

<sup>219</sup> *Nigrodha,parimaṇḍalo hoti, yāvatakv-assa kāyo tāvatakv-assa vyāmo yāvatakv-assa vyāmo tāvatakv-assa kāyo.*

Bhikshus, that the great man has *a perfect voice (like Brahmā's)*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(29) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's eyes are a deep bluish-black (*abhinīla,netta*). [§2.10.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *eyes are deep bluish-black*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(30) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's eye-lashes are (long and shapely) like a cow's (*abhinīla,-netta*). [§2.14.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *eye-lashes are (long and shapely) like a cow's*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

(31) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man has hair between his eye-brows that is white, soft like cotton-down (*uñṇā bhamuk'antare jātā hoti, odātā mudu,tūla,sannibhā*). [§2.16.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man has *hair between his eye-brows is white, soft like cotton-down*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man. [145]

(32) Furthermore, bhikshus, the great man's head is shaped like a royal turban (*uñhīsa,sīsa*). [§2.13.1]

Bhikshus, that the great man's *head is shaped like a royal turban*, this, bhikshus, is, indeed, a great man's mark of the great man.

**1.3.1** These, bhikshus, are these thirty-two marks of the great man. For the great man endowed with them, there is only one of two destinies, no other.

If he remains living a house-life, he becomes a universal [wheel-turning] monarch, Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.

### The wheel-turner's seven jewels

**1.3.2** These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:

the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh. [1.2.1]

More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.

He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.

**1.3.1** However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.

### The marks are karmically endowed

**1.3.2** These marks have been obtained on account of these karma that have been done.

### (1) Feet with a level tread (The 1<sup>st</sup> mark)

**1.4.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata undertook mighty efforts in wholesome things, undertook unfaltering efforts in the purity of body, speech and mind by way of sharing gifts, undertaking the precepts, observing the precept-day [the uposatha], fulfilling duties towards mother, towards father, towards recluses, and towards brahmins, serving the head of the family, by way of some or other duty that were exceedingly good. [146]

**1.4.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There he was surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains this mark of the great man:

**1.4.3 Feet with a level tread.** He places his foot evenly on the ground, evenly lifting it off the ground, evenly touching it with the entire sole of the foot.<sup>220</sup>

**1.5.1 THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN.** On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turning king [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.

These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:

the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.

More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.

He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.

**1.5.2 As a king**, what does he get?

He is unhindered by any unfriendly human with hostile intent.<sup>221</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**1.5.3 THE BUDDHA REFRAIN.** However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.

**1.5.4 As the Buddha**, what does he get?

He is unhindered [not paralyzed], internally and externally, by anyone unfriendly with hostile intent on account of greed, or hate, or delusion, whether a recluse, [147] a brahmin, a deva, a Māra, a brahma, or anyone else in the world.<sup>222</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**1.6** In this matter, this was said:<sup>223</sup>

1 *Sacce ca dhamme ca dame ca sāmyame  
soceyya, sīl'ālay'uposathesu ca  
dāne ahimsāya asāhase rato  
dalham samādāya samattam*<sup>224</sup> ācari

Truthful, righteous, tamed, and sense-guarded,  
abiding in moral purity of the observance,  
delighting in giving, non-violent, harmless,  
he lived firmly committed to equality.

2 *So tena kammaṇa divaṃ samakkami*<sup>225</sup>  
*sukhañ ca khiḍḍā, ratiyo ca anvabhi*<sup>226</sup>  
*tato cavitvā punar-āgato idha  
samehi pādehi phusī vasundharam*

By that karma, he reached heaven,  
and enjoyed happiness and playful delight.  
From there, he fell and is reborn here,  
touching the earth with his even foot.

3 *Vyākāmsu veyyañjanikā samāgatā  
sama-p, patiṭṭhassa na hoti khambhanā  
gihissa vā pabbajitassa vā puna  
tam lakkhaṇam bhavati tad attha, jotakam*

The assembled sooth-sayers predicted,  
“No obstruction is there for the one of even step,  
whether he lives at home, or again were to renounce,  
this mark will shine on his goal.”

4 *Akkhambhiyo hoti agāram āvasam  
parābhibhū sattubhi na-p, pamaddano  
manussa, bhūten idha hoti kenaci  
akkhambhiyo tassa phalena kammuno*

Unhindered, he will live the house-life,  
unvanquished by other lords or enemies,  
nor is there any human here  
who can hinder him on account of his karmic fruit.

<sup>220</sup> “Feet with a level tread,” *suppatitthita, pāda*, lit “well-placed feet,” §1.2.2(1). Comys say that the whole foot touches the ground all at once, not the big toe nor the heel first (DA 2:445 ≈ MA 3:374 f; DA 3:919-923).

<sup>221</sup> *Akkhambhiyo hoti kenaci manussa, bhūtena paccatthikena paccā, mittena.*

<sup>222</sup> *Akkhambhiyo hoti abbhantarehi vā bāhirehi vā paccatthikehi paccā, mittehi rāgena vā dosena vā mohena vā samaṇena vā brāhmaṇena vā devena vā mārena vā brahmunā vā kenaci vā lokasmim.*

<sup>223</sup> For my text, both prose and verse, I have mainly relied on Be (the Chaṭṭha Saṅgīti version). For variant readings, see Norman 1971, 1987-88 & 1993.

<sup>224</sup> Ke Se *samanta-*.

<sup>225</sup> Be Ee *samakkami*; Ce Ke *apakkami*, “he left.”

<sup>226</sup> Aor of *anubhavati*, “he enjoys, partakes of.” I read as *saṅkami*.



5 *Sace ca pabbajjam upeti tādiso  
nekkhamma, chandābhirato vicakkhāṇo  
aggo na so gacchati jātu khambhanam  
nar'uttamo esa hi tassa dhammatā'ti*

And if such a one turns to the going forth,  
set in delighting in the desire for renunciation,  
the foremost one goes without facing any hindrance:  
for, he is the highest of men—this is his nature,

## (2) Wheel-signs on the soles (The 2<sup>nd</sup> mark)

**1.7.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata [148] was a bringer of happiness to the masses; remover of the dangers of fear and terror; a just provider of protection, defence and guard; who gave gifts along with supplies.

**1.7.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains this mark of the great man:

**1.7.3 On the soles of his feet are wheels**, each with a thousand spokes, all rimmed and hubbed, complete in every way.<sup>227</sup>

**1.8.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**1.8.2** As a king, what does he get?

He has a great entourage: great is his following of brahmin householders,<sup>228</sup> market-townfolk and countryfolk, accountants and chief ministers, body-guards, door-keepers, ministers, courtiers, vassals, and royal sons.<sup>229</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**1.8.3** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**1.8.4** As the Buddha, what does he get?

He has a great following: great is his following of monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, gods, humans, nagas and gandharvas.<sup>230</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

<sup>227</sup> In brief, “wheel on the sole,” *pāda.tala,cakka*: see §1.2.2(2), ie, one wheel one each sole. The Comys list an additional 108 auspicious marks as extensions of the wheel (such a white parasol, the turban, the sun and moon, the four continents, etc), ie “the complete attending wheel marks of the world monarch” (*sabba cakka,lakkhaṇa parivāra*) of the universal monarch (DA 2:445 f ≈ MA 3:375; DA 3:923-925). Full lists of these marks are found in **Jinā-laṅkāra Ṭikā** and **Anāgata,vaṃsa** Aṭṭhakathā (Ency Bsm 3:452, sv Buddhapāda). This is the last stage in the evolution of the marks, and is also the basis for the tradition of the “foot-print shrine” (*pada,cetiya* and *pada,vaḷaṅja*). See Endo 1997:163-165. The most famous depiction of the Buddha's foot with all its marks, made of mother-of-pearl, can be seen on the reclining Buddha in Wat Pho, Bangkok: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wat\\_Pho](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wat_Pho).

<sup>228</sup> *Brāhmaṇa,gahapatika*, also spelt *brāhmaṇa,gahapati*, which is invariably a collective term, never an individual, ie, the landed community of of the brahmin villages (*brāhmaṇa,gāma*) or fiefs (*brahma,deya*) as a whole. This classification is based on land-ownership (ie their economic function), who nonetheless still identified with the larger priestly class. As such, individually, theu (such as Kūṭa,danta, Caṅkī, etc) are still referred to simply as *brāhmaṇa*. See Uma Chakravarti, *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism*, Oxford Univ Press, 1987:72 f.

<sup>229</sup> *Mahā,parivāro hoti, mahā'ssa honti parivārā brāhmaṇa,gahapatikā negama,jānapadā gaṇaka,mahāmattā anikaṭṭhā dovārikā amaccā pārisajjā rājāno bhogiyā kumārā.*

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**1.9** In this matter, this was said:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1 <i>Pure puratthā purimāsu jātisu manussa,bhūto bahunnaṃ sukh'āvaho ubbega,uttāsa,bhayāpanūdano guttīsu rakkhā'varaṇesu ussuko</i> [149]</p>                              | <p>Long ago in times past, in previous births, as a human, he was a bringer of happiness to many, a dispeller of the dangers of fear and terror, zealous in guarding, protecting and defending.</p> |
| <p>2 <i>So tena kammaena divaṃ samakkami sukhaṃ ca khiḍḍā,ratiyo ca anvabhi tato cavitvā punar-āgato idha cakkāni pādesu duvesu vindati</i></p>                               | <p>By that karma, he reached heaven, and enjoyed happiness and playful delight. From there, he fell and is reborn here, gaining wheels on both his feet.</p>  |
| <p>3 <i>Samanta,nemīni sahasarāni ca vyākamsu veyyañjanikā samāgatā disvā kumāraṃ sata,puñña,lakkhaṇaṃ parivāravā hessati sattu,maddano</i></p>                               | <p>The one with wheels full a thousand spokes, the assembled sooth-sayers predicted, having seen the boy with the mark of a hundred merits, surrounded will he be with foe-crushers.</p>            |
| <p>4 <i>Tathā hi cakkāni samanta,nemīni sace na pabbajjam upeti tādiso vatteti cakkam pathaviṃ pasāsati tassānuyantādha bhavanti khattiyā</i></p>                             | <p>For, such is he, with the full-hubbed wheels: if such a one does not turn to the going forth, he, turning the wheel, will rule the earth, and kings would here become his vassals.</p>           |
| <p>5 <i>Mahā,yasaṃ samparivārayanti<sup>231</sup> nam<sup>232</sup> sace ca pabbajjam upeti tādiso nekkhamma,chandābhirato vicakkhaṇo devā manussāsura,sakka,rakkhasā</i></p> | <p>Of great fame is he: if such a one turns to the going-forth, wisely delighting in the desire for renunciation, he would be surrounded by gods, humans, asuras, Shakra, rakshasas;</p>            |
| <p>6 <i>Gandhabba,nāgā vihagā catu-p,padā anuttaraṃ deva,manussa,pūjitaṃ mahā,yasaṃ samparivārayanti nan'ti</i></p>   | <p>surrounded by gandharvas, nagas, sky-goers,<sup>233</sup> and the four-legged, worshipped by gods and humans as the supreme one, of great fame is he!</p>  |

### (3) His limbs and frame (The 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> marks)

**1.10.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata, having given up killing living beings, refrained from harming living beings, laid down rod and sword, conscientious, merciful, dwelled beneficial and compassionate to all living beings.<sup>234</sup>

**1.10.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed*

<sup>230</sup> Nagas (*nāga*) are traditionally powerful beings that dwell underground or underwater, often keeping records of important human teachings or objects (such as the past Buddha's bowls, J 1:70), while gandharvas (*gandhabba*) are traditionally celestial beings, denizens of Tāvātimsa heaven (D 2:212), or followers of Virupakkha, the Great King of eastern quarter, D 2:257). The two are often classed together (along with the asuras) (A 4:200, 204, 207). Here, I think, these two kinds of beings represent the spirits that are earth-bound (the nagas) and that are sky-bound or celestial (the gandharvas). Such an idea attests to the lateness of this sutta.

<sup>231</sup> The more common form is *samparivāreti* (sg), "surrounded, attended to, waited up on (by)" (J 1:61).

<sup>232</sup> These 2 verses (5+6) are a free translations as it is difficult for the English to fit interlinearly.

<sup>233</sup> *Vihagā*, "sky-goers," generally, "birds," but here may contextually refer to *garuḷa* (Skt *garuḍa*) ("harpies," Vism 206; VvA 9 = *suvanṇa*; DhA 1:144).

<sup>234</sup> From "having given up killing living beings..." *pāṇātipātāṃ pahāya pāṇātipātā paṭivirato ahoṣi nihita,daṇḍo nihita,sattho lajjī dayāpanno sabba,pāṇa,bhūta,hitānukampī vihāsi*, as at **Sāleyyaka S** (M 41.12/1:287) = SD 5.7 (pres tense).

other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, [150] he obtains these three mark of the great man:

**1.10.3** He has **projecting heels**,<sup>235</sup> and **long fingers**,<sup>236</sup> and **his body is perfectly straight (like Brahmā's)**.<sup>237</sup>

**1.11.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with these marks, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**1.11.2** As a **king**, what does he get?

He is long-lived and endures long. His longevity is guarded. No one, no unfriendly human with hostile intent, is capable of ending his life during that interval. This is what he gets as a king.

**1.11.3** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**1.11.4** As **the Buddha**, what does he get?

He is long-lived; he endures long. His longevity is guarded. No one, whether a recluse, a brahmin, a deva, a Māra, a brahma, or anyone else in the world, with hostile intent, is capable of ending his life during that interval. This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**1.12** In this matter, this was said:<sup>238</sup>

1 *Marāṇa*,<sup>239</sup> *vaḍḍha*, *bhaya* 'attano *viditvā*  
*paṭivirato*<sup>240</sup> *param*<sup>241</sup> *māraṇā*-y<sup>242</sup>-*ahosi*  
*tena*<sup>243</sup> *sucaritena* *saggam* *agamā*<sup>244</sup>  
*sukata*, *phala*, *vipākam* *anubhosi*

Knowing his own fear of death and destruction, he avoided bringing death to others.

By that good action, he went to heaven, and enjoyed the ripe fruit of deeds well done.

2 *Caviya* *punar*-*idh* 'āgato *samāno*  
*paṭilabhati* *idha* *tīṇi* *lakkhaṇāni*  
*bhavati* *vipula*, *dīgha*, *pāsaṇhiko*<sup>245</sup>

Having fallen from heaven, he comes here again.

Here, he obtains three marks:  
his heels are large and long,

<sup>235</sup> *Āyata, paṇhi*: §1.2.2(3). Comy gives these four-part (*catu koṭṭhāsa*) measurements: 2 parts are the sole and toes (*agga, pāda*), one part the lower leg (*jaṅgha*), one part the heel (*paṇhi*) (DA 2:446 ≈ MA 3:376; DA 3:925 f). This could mean that either the lower legs are very short or the feet are very large!

<sup>236</sup> *Dīgh'āṅguli*: §1.2.2(4). All the four fingers and four toes are of equal length, like a monkey's. Note here that *āṅguli* (text) means "fingers," but Comy incl feet (*hattha, pād'āṅguliyo*), too. Comys add that the fingers are thick at the roots and taper off towards the tips. (DA 2:446 ≈ MA 3:376; DA 3:926)

<sup>237</sup> *Brahm'uju, gatta*: §1.2.2(15). He neither stoops nor leans forward, nor is his spine crooked. Most beings bend at the shoulders, hips and knees, but the Buddha stands tall and symmetrical like a golden tower-gate in the celestial city. (DA 2:448 ≈ MA 3:378; DA 3:926)

<sup>238</sup> For a rev reading & metrical study of these 4 verses, see Norman 1984 & 1987-88.

<sup>239</sup> Ee *marāṇa*-; Be *māraṇa*-.

<sup>240</sup> Ee *pati*-.

<sup>241</sup> Be Ee Se *param*; Ce *para*-.

<sup>242</sup> Ee Se *māraṇā*-y-.

<sup>243</sup> Se adds *so*.

<sup>244</sup> Se *agamāsi*.

<sup>245</sup> So Be Ce; Ce vll *pānike, pānino*; Ee *pāniko*; Ke Se *pāsuniko*.

- brahmā'va suju*<sup>246</sup> *subho sujāta,gatto* his body well-born, Brahma-like, upright, comely.
- 3 *Subhujō susu*<sup>247</sup> *susaṅghito sujāto mudu,talun*<sup>249</sup> *aṅguliyaṣṣa honti* [151] His arms excellent, well formed, well shaped,<sup>248</sup> with soft and tender fingers,  
*dīghā tībhi*<sup>250</sup> *purisa,var'agga,*<sup>251</sup> *lakkhaṇehi*<sup>252</sup> long—by these three marks of the foremost man, they declare that the boy will live long.  
*cira,yapanāya*<sup>253</sup> *kumāram ādisanti*
- 4 *Bhavati yadi gihī ciraṃ yapeti cirataraṃ pabbajati yadī tato hi yāpayati ca*<sup>254</sup> *vas'iddhi,bhāvanāya iti dīgh'āyukatāya tam*<sup>255</sup> *nimittan'ti* If he becomes a householder, he will live long, but even longer-lived, if he renounces that: and he lives to cultivate psychic powers— this then is a sign of a long life.

#### (4) The seven convexes (The 16<sup>th</sup> mark)

**1.13.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata gave exquisite and delicious food, hard and soft, savouries, and drinks.<sup>256</sup>

**1.13.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains this mark of the great man:

**1.13.3 The seven convexes (on his body).** His seven convexes are on both hands, on both feet, on top of both shoulders, and on the trunk.<sup>257</sup>

**1.14.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are the seven jewels, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

<sup>246</sup> Be Ce *va suju*; Ee *viy'ujju*.

<sup>247</sup> So Be; Ce *brahma,visujjā*; Be vl *brahmā,vasuju*; Ke *brahmā'va suju*.

<sup>248</sup> *Sujata*: see Dhammapāla's gloss, "endowed in height and girth," ad Sn 548 f (SnA 453); "agreeable" (BHSD: *sujāta* & *sujāta-jāta*).

<sup>249</sup> Ce *-taphaṇ'*.

<sup>250</sup> Be Se *tībhi*; Ee *tīhi*.

<sup>251</sup> Se omits *-var'agga-*.

<sup>252</sup> Se *lakkhaṇaebhi*.

<sup>253</sup> Se *-yāpanāya*.

<sup>254</sup> So Be; others omit.

<sup>255</sup> So Be; others *tan*.

<sup>256</sup> From "gave exquisite and delicious food..." onwards: *Dātā ahoṣi paṇītānaṃ rasiṭānaṃ khādanīyānaṃ bhojanīyānaṃ sāyanīyānaṃ lehanīyānaṃ pānānaṃ*. These are the 4 conditions (*dāna, peyya,vajja, attha,cariya, samān'at-tatā*) for the integration of a group or of society, or consolidating friendship, partnership and unity (D 3:152, 232; A 2:32, 248, 4:218, 363). Hatthaka of Āḷavī is declared by the Buddha to be the foremost amongst the laity who has a following through the 4 bases of conciliation (*saṅgha,vatthu*) (A 1:26). See **Āḷavaka S** (A 3.34/1:136-138) = SD 4.8 = SD 4.8 & **Saṅgha Bala S** (A 9.5.6/4:364) = SD 2.21.

<sup>257</sup> *Satt'ussado hoti, sattassa ussadā honti: ubhosu hatthesu ussadā honti, ubhosu pādesu ussadā honti, ubhosu aṃsa,kūtesu ussadā honti, khandhe ussado hoti:* §1.2.2(16). The backs of the four limbs, the shoulders and the trunk are well rounded with flesh (DA 2:448 ≈ MA 3:378 f; DA 3:926 f). Note here that the text reflects the Comy. This might be a hint that this section or these sections were added much later, and that the original sutta was much shorter, perhaps ending at §1.3.1; or that the remaining sections were much shorter.

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.  
He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**1.14.2** As a **king**, what does he get?

He gets exquisite and delicious food, hard and soft, savouries, and drinks.<sup>258</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**1.14.3** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**1.14.4** As **the Buddha**, what does he get? [152]

He gets exquisite and delicious food, hard and soft, savouries, and drinks. This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**1.15** In this matter, this was said:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 <i>Khajja, bhojja atha leyya sāyiyam<br/>uttam'agga, rasa, dāyako ahu<br/>tena so sucaritena kammunā<br/>nandane ciram abhippamodati</i>                         | Foods hard and soft, drinks and savouries,<br>a giver he was of supreme and foremost tastes.<br>By such well-done karma, he<br>long rejoiced in Nandana grove.  |
| 2 <i>Satta c'ussade idhādhigacchati<br/>hattha, pāda, mudutañ ca vindati<br/>āhu vyañjana, nimitta, kovidā<br/>khajja, bhojja, rasa, lābhitāya nam</i>             | And seven convexes he gains here,<br>found on his soft hands and feet.<br>Those wise in reading signs said that<br>he would gain such foods, hard and soft.   |
| 3 <i>Yam gihissa pi tad attha, jotakam<br/>pabbajjam pi ca tad ādhigacchati<br/>khajja, bhojja, rasa, lābhi-r-uttamam<br/>āhu sabba, gihi, bandhan'acchidan'ti</i> | The meaning's light is that just as in the house,<br>so too if he chooses to go forth [to renounce],<br>he would receive excellent food, hard and soft,<br>as one whose bonds to houses are cut, they said. |

### (5) Tender and webbed hands and feet (The 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> marks)

**1.16.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata supported the people through the four bases of conciliation, that is, through giving, pleasant speech [convincing words], beneficial conduct and impartiality.<sup>259</sup>

**1.16.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains these two marks of the great man: [153]

**1.16.3** Soft, tender hands and feet<sup>260</sup> and hands and feet that are net-like [reticulated, evenly spaced].<sup>261</sup>

<sup>258</sup> *Lābhī hoti pañītānam rasiṭānam khādanīyānam bhojanīyānam sāyanīyānam lehanīyānam pānānam.*

<sup>259</sup> From "supports the people..." onwards: *Catūhi saṅgaha, vatthūhi janam saṅgāhako ahoṣi, dānena peyya, vajjena attha, cariyāya samān'attatāya.* Comy: DA 3:927 f. On the 4 bases of conciliation (*saṅgaha, vatthu*), see **Saṅgiti S** (D 33.1.11.40/3:232), (**Pasenadi**) **Yañña S** (S 3.9/1:76) & SD 22.11 Intro (1.2.2), (**Gāthā**) **Saṅgaha, vatthu S** (A 4.32/2:32), (**Saṅkhitta**) **Saṅgaha, vatthu S** (A 4.253/2:248); **Saṅgaha Bāla S** (A 9.5.6/4:364) & SD 2.21 Intro (1.2); see also **Ujjaya S** (A 4.39/2:42 f), (**Aṭṭha**) **Mettānisamsa S** (A 8.1/4:151); Sn303; It 21; J 4:302, 5:330; SnA 321; JPTS 1909:31.

<sup>260</sup> **Mudu, taluna, hattha, pāda**: §1.2.2(5). His hands and feet are tender as if spread over with cream of ghee and wrapped with a hundred layers of carded cotton (*sappi, maṇḍe osāretvā ṭhapitam sata, vāra, vihata, kappāsa, paṭalam vitu mudu*) (DA 2:446 ≈ MA 3:376; DA 3:928).

**1.17.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**1.17.2** As a king, what does he get?

He has a good entourage of supporters: he is well supported by brahmin householders, market-town-folk and countryfolk, accountants and chief ministers, body-guards, door-keepers, ministers, courtiers, vassals, and royal sons.<sup>262</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**1.17.3** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**1.17.4** As the Buddha, what does he get?

He has a good following of supporters: he is supported by monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, gods, humans, nagas and gandharvas.<sup>263</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**1.18** In this matter, this was said:<sup>264</sup>

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | <i>Dānam pi c'attha,<sup>265</sup> cariya,tañ<sup>266</sup> ca piya,vāditañ<sup>267</sup> ca samān'attatañ ca kariya,cariya,susaṅgahaṃ bahūnaṃ<sup>268</sup> anavamatenā guṇena yāti saggam</i> | Giving and beneficent acts, too, loving speech and impartiality, too, doing welfare and behaving well to many— because of noble virtue, he went to heaven.  |
| 2 | <i>Cariya punar-idh'āgato samāno kara,caraṇa,mudutañ<sup>269</sup> ca jālino ca atirucira,suvaggu,<sup>270</sup> dassaneyyaṃ paṭilabhati daharo susu kumāro [154]</i>                           | Having passed away, returning here again, his hands and feet are soft and net-like, very pleasant, so lovely to see— (these) the tender young boy receives. |
| 3 | <i>Bhavati parijan'assavo vidheyyo mahimaṃ<sup>271</sup> āvasito<sup>272</sup> susaṅgahito piya,vadū<sup>273</sup> hita,sukhataṃ jigimsamāno<sup>274</sup></i>                                  | Loyal and obedient are his followers, well disposed is he to the world's inhabitants; pleasant in speech, desirous of happiness and good,                   |

<sup>261</sup> **Jāla,hattha,pāda:** §1.2.2(6). Comys says that it is *not* webbed, ie “has no skin covering between the fingers” (*na cammena paṭibaddha, aṅgul'antaro*), reticulated (set in right lines, like the meshes of a net), or “netted” (*jala*) like the latticed window made by a skilled carpenter. It notes that one with webbed fingers (like the snake's hood) is unfit to join the order (V 1:91, 321) (DA 2:446 ≈ MA 3:376). DA 3 is silent. See J N Banerjee, “The ‘webbed fingers’ of the Buddha,” 1930.

<sup>262</sup> *Su,saṅgahita,parijano hoti, su,saṅgahitāssa honti brāhmaṇa,gahapatikā negama,jānapadā gaṇaka,mahāmattā anīkaṭṭhā dovārikā amaccā pārisajjā rājāno bhogiyā kumārā.*

<sup>263</sup> *Su,saṅgahita,parijano hoti, su,saṅgahitāssa honti bhikkhū bhikkhuniyo upāsakā upāsikāyo devā manussā asurā nāgā gandhabbā.*

<sup>264</sup> For a rev reading & metrical study of these 4 verses, see Norman 1984 & 1987-88.

<sup>265</sup> So Be Ce Se; Ee *ca attha*.

<sup>266</sup> Ee *cariyatam pi*.

<sup>267</sup> Be *vāditañ*; Ee *vadatañ*.

<sup>268</sup> Be *abhūnaṃ*; Ee *bahunnaṃ*.

<sup>269</sup> Be Ee *mudutañ*; Ce *mudutalañ*; Se *mudukañ*.

<sup>270</sup> Se *—suvagga-*.

<sup>271</sup> Ce *mahim iva*; Ee *mahimaṃ*.

<sup>272</sup> Be Se *āvasito*; Ce *māvasate*; Ee *āvasiko*.

*abhirucitāni guṇāni ācarati*<sup>275</sup>

he practises delightful virtues.

4 *Yadi ca jahati sabba,kāma,*<sup>276</sup>*bhogam*  
*kathayati dhamma,katham jino janassa*  
*vacana,paṭikar*<sup>277</sup> *assābhippasannā*<sup>278</sup>  
*sutvāna*<sup>279</sup> *dhamm'ānudhammam*<sup>280</sup>  
*ācarantī'ti*

But if he abandons all sensual pleasures and wealth, and as the conqueror speaks Dharma to the people, those who practise his word will have great faith: listening, they live the Dharma keeping to the Dharma.

## (6) Raised ankles & upward-growing body-hair (The 7<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> marks)

**1.19.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata was a speaker of words connected with the Dharma, pointing it out to the masses, a Dharma-giver who brought good and happiness to living beings.<sup>281</sup>

**1.19.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains these two marks of the great man:

**1.19.3** High-raised ankles<sup>282</sup> and upward-growing body-hair.<sup>283</sup>

**1.20.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**1.20.2** As a king, what does he get?

He is the foremost and best chief, the supreme and distinguished amongst those who enjoy sense-pleasures.<sup>284</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**1.20.3** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**1.20.4** As the Buddha, what does he get?

He is the foremost and best chief, the supreme and distinguished of all beings.<sup>285</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

<sup>273</sup> Be Se –vadū; Ee –vadu.

<sup>274</sup> Be jigīsamāno; Se jigīmsamāno.

<sup>275</sup> Ce ācaranto.

<sup>276</sup> Ee kāma,guṇa-; Ce kāma,guṇā; Be Se omit -guṇa-.

<sup>277</sup> Ee -ppaṭikar'.

<sup>278</sup> Be Ee Se ābhippasannā.

<sup>279</sup> Be Se sutvāna.

<sup>280</sup> Be Ee Se –ānudhammam.

<sup>281</sup> From “is a speaker of words...” onwards: *Dhammūpasamhitam vācam bhāsītā ahoṣi bahu,janam nidamsesi, pañīnam hita,sukh'āvaho dhamma,yāgī.*

<sup>282</sup> **Ussaṅkha,pāda:** §1.2.2(7). His ankles are elevated, not near the heels as in other people, so that the sole can be seen as he walks (DA 2:447 ≈ MA 3:376 f; DA 3:929 f). See BHSD *ucchaṅka* for further details..

<sup>283</sup> **Uddh'agga'loma:** §1.2.2(14), where it is def in more detail. DA 2:448 ≈ MA 3:378; DA 3:923-925.

<sup>284</sup> *Aggo ca hoti seṭṭho ca pāmokkho ca uttamo ca pavaro ca kāma,bhogīnam.*

<sup>285</sup> *Aggo ca hoti seṭṭho ca pāmokkho ca uttamo ca pavaro ca sabba,sattānam.*

**1.21** In this matter, this was said: [155]

1 *Attha,dhamma,sahitaṃ*<sup>286</sup> *pure girāṃ*  
*erayaṃ*<sup>287</sup> *bahu,janaṃ nidaṃsayi*  
*pāṇinaṃ hita,sukh'āvaho ahu*  
*dhamma,yāgam ayajī*<sup>288</sup> *amaccharī*

In the past, his voice, linking the Dharma and its goal,  
reciting, pointed them out to the masses,  
bringing good and happiness to living beings,  
he generously made the Dharma-sacrifice.<sup>289</sup>

2 *Tena so sucaritena kammunā*  
*suggatiṃ vajati tattha modati*  
*lakkhaṇāni ca duve idh'āgato*  
*uttama-p,pamukhatāya vindati*<sup>290</sup>

By virtue of this pure karma,  
he went to heaven, and rejoiced there,  
he arrived here with two marks, and  
gains supreme leadership.

3 *Ubbham uppatita,loma,vāsaso*<sup>291</sup>  
*pāda,gaṇṭhi-r-ahu sādhu,saṅghitā*  
*mamsa,lohitaçitā taco,tathā*<sup>292</sup>  
*upari,caraṇa,sobhanā ahu*

His body hair stands upright,  
his ankle well-shaped.  
Below the skin are flesh and blood true,  
above them, his conduct so beautiful.

3 *Geham āvasati ce tathā,vidho*  
*aggataṃ vajati kāma,bhogaṇaṃ*  
*tena uttaritaro na vijjati*  
*jambu,dīpaṃ abhibhuyya iriyati* [156]

If it were such that he lived in a house,  
he would go on to be foremost in sensual enjoyment.  
As such, there is none higher to be found  
in Jambu,dīpa [India], where he moves in victory.

4 *Pabbajam pi ca anoma,nikkamo*  
*aggataṃ vajati sabba,pāṇinaṃ*  
*tena uttaritaro na vijjati*  
*sabba,lokam abhibhuyya viharatī'ti*

And of unfathomable courage is his renunciation, too,  
foremost he goes amongst all living beings.  
As such, there is none higher to be found:  
he dwells victorious in all the world.

**(7) Legs like those of an antelope's (The 8<sup>th</sup> mark)**

**1.22.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata was a reciter [speaker] in an art, a science, careful in conduct and action, thinking, 'Which of these learnings can I quickly learn, quickly practise, without tiring myself for long?'<sup>293</sup>

**1.22.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains this mark of the great man:

**1.22.3** Legs that are like those of an antelope's.<sup>294</sup>

<sup>286</sup> So Be; Ce Ee Ke *attha,dhamma,samhitāṃ*; Ke v1 *attha,dhamm'upasaṃhitāṃ*.

<sup>287</sup> So Be Ke; DA *eraya*; Ce *caraya*. See Sn 350a = Tha 1270a (in ref to geese). Comy glosses *eraya* as *bhananto*, "reciting" (DA 3:929).

<sup>288</sup> *Ayajī*, aor & sg of *yajati*, "he sacrifices." This line = It 102,12\*, where it is glossed as *adāsi*, "he gave" (ItA 2:-146).

<sup>289</sup> Comy says that here, the gift of the Dharma is meant (DA 3:930). Cf the 2 kinds of sacrifices (*vāga*), **Yāga S** (A 2.13.2/1:91).

<sup>290</sup> So Be; Ee *uttama,sukhāni samvindati* ("he finds highest happiness"); Ke ~ *samukhatāya*.

<sup>291</sup> So Ce Ee DA; Be *vāsaso*; Ke *lomavā saso*.

<sup>292</sup> Be Ke *taco,thatā*; Ce Ee DA *taco,tatā*; Ce v1 *taco,tathā*.

<sup>293</sup> From "is a reciter..." onwards: *Sakkaccaṃ vācetaḥ ahosi sippaṃ vā vijjaṃ vā caraṇaṃ vā kammaṃ vā*, "kin t'i-me khippaṃ vijāneyyūṃ, khippaṃ paṭipajjeyyūṃ, na cirāṃ kilisseyyūṃ'ti.



**1.23.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are the seven jewels, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**1.23.2** As a king, what does he get?

Whatever that is worthy of a king, the qualities of a king, that a king enjoys, that befits a king, he obtains quickly.<sup>295</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**1.23.3** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**1.23.4** As the Buddha, what does he get?

Whatever that is worthy of a recluse, the qualities of a recluse, that a recluse enjoys, that befits a recluse, he obtains quickly.<sup>296</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**1.24** In this matter, this was said:

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | <i>Sippesu vijjā, caraṇesu kammesu<br/>katham vijāneyyūṃ lahun ti icchati [157]<br/>yadūpaghātāya<sup>297</sup> na hoti kassaci<br/>vāceti khippam na ciram kilissati</i> | In arts, in sciences, in conduct, in work,<br>“How can they be learnt with ease,” he wished,<br>so that none was harmed in any way;<br>swiftly he learned without labouring long.          |
| 2 | <i>Tam kammaṃ katvā kusalam sukh’udrayam<br/>jaṅghā manuññā labhate susaṅghitā<br/>vaṭṭā sujātā anupubbam uggatā<br/>uddh’agga, lomā sukhuma-t, taco’tthatā</i>           | Having done the good deed that brings happiness<br>he gains pleasant well-formed shanks.<br>In well-formed curl, rising high, one by one,<br>his hair-tips stand upright on delicate skin. |
| 3 | <i>Eneyya, jaṅgho’ti tam āhu puggalam<br/>sampattiyā khippam idhāhu lakkhaṇam<br/>gehānulomāni yadābhikaṅkhati<br/>apabbajam khippam idhādhiḡacchati</i>                  | It’s like an antelope’s legs, people say,<br>quick is he here endowed with this mark.<br>If he wishes to follow the house-life,<br>then, not renouncing, he quickly arrives here.          |
| 4 | <i>Sace ca pabbajjam upeti tādiso<br/>nekkhamma, chandābhirato vicakkaṇo<br/>anucchavikassa yadānulomikam<sup>298</sup><br/>tam vindati khippam anoma, vikkamo’ti.</i>    | But if such a one turns to going forth,<br>wisely delighting in the desire for renunciation<br>when it is appropriate and suitable,<br>he quickly finds that unfathomable heroism.         |

## (8) Delicate and smooth skin (The 12<sup>th</sup> mark)

**1.25.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata was one whom recluses and brahmins approached and questioned, ‘What, bhante, is wholesome, what is unwholesome, what is blameworthy, what is not blameworthy, what should be associated with, what

<sup>294</sup> *Eni, jaṅgho hoti:* §1.2.2(8). His legs are evenly fleshed all around, not in a lump at one side. The joints (below the knees) show in a rounded manner like an ear of rice or barley (DA 2:447 ≈ MA 3:377; DA 3:930 f).

<sup>295</sup> *Yāni tāni rājārahāni rāj’añgāni rājūpabhogāni rājānucchavikāni tāni khippam paṭilabhati.*

<sup>296</sup> *Yāni tāni samaṇārahāni samaṇ’añgāni samaṇūpabhogāni samaṇānucchavikāni, tāni khippam paṭilabhati.*

<sup>297</sup> *Yadūpaghātāya = yadi upaghātāya*, where *yadi* means “if; let it be (that).”

<sup>298</sup> *Yadānulomikam = yadi anulomikam*, where *yadi* means “if; let it be (that).”

should not be associated with, what when done is for my suffering for a long time, what when done is for my happiness for a long time?’<sup>299</sup>

**1.25.2 THE DIVINE REFRAIN.** *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body’s breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains this mark of the great man: [158]

**1.25.3 Skin so delicate and smooth** that neither dust nor dirt can settle on it.<sup>300</sup>

**1.26.1 THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN.** *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**1.26.2 As a king**, what does he get?

He is one with great wisdom. There is none amongst those who enjoy sensual pleasures who is equal to or better than him in wisdom.<sup>301</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**1.26.3 THE BUDDHA REFRAIN.** *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**1.26.4 As the Buddha**, what does he get?

He is one with great wisdom,<sup>302</sup> broad wisdom, joyful wisdom, quick wisdom, sharp wisdom, penetrating wisdom, without an equal or a better amongst all beings.<sup>303</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**1.27** In this matter, this was said:

1 *Pure puratthā purimāsu jātisu  
aññātu, kāmo paripucchitā ahu*

Long ago, in times past, in previous births,  
he was a questioner eager to know,

<sup>299</sup> From “is one whom recluses and brahmins” onwards: *Samaṇaṃ vā brāhmaṇaṃ vā upasaṅkamitvā paripucchitā ahoṣi*, “*Kim, bhante, kusalam, kim akusalam, kim sāvajjaṃ, kim anavajjaṃ, kim sevittabbaṃ, kim na sevittabbaṃ, kim me kariyamānaṃ dīgha, rattam ahitāya dukkhāya assa, kim vā pana me kariyamānaṃ dīgharattam hitāya sukhāya assā’ ti.*

<sup>300</sup> *Sukhuma-c, chavi hoti, sukhumattā chaviyā rajo, jallam kāye na upalimpi*: §1.2.2(12) & [4.5.1-2]. His skin is so smooth and delicate, that neither dust nor dirt can settle on it. As such, he does not need to wash at all, but does so for as an example to his followers (DA 2:436; DA 2:448 ≈ MA 3:378; DA 3:931).

<sup>301</sup> *Mahā, pañño hoti, nāssa hoti koci paññāya sadiso vā seṭṭho vā kāma, bhogīnaṃ.*

<sup>302</sup> This stock passage is spoken by the Buddha (**Anupada S**, M 111.2/3:25) and also by Ānanda (**Susima S** (S 2.29/1:1:63), both in praise of Sāriputta. Detailed def at Pm 2:190-202. Comy on the 6 kinds of wisdom summarized here: “**great wisdom**” (*mahā, pañña*) in terms of the trainings in moral virtue, in concentration, and in wisdom, in liberation, and in the knowledge and vision of liberation; of what is possible and what is impossible (*thān’atthāna*); of the attainment of the divine abodes, the noble truths, the 37 limbs of awakening (the 7 sets: **Bodhi, pakkhiyā Dhammā**, SD 10.1), the fruits of recluseship (D 2 & SD 8.10(3)), the psychic powers (SD 27.5a(5)), and ultimately nirvana; “**broad wisdom**” (*puṭhu, paññā*) is the great understanding of the various aggregates, the elements, dependent arising, etc; “**joyful wisdom**” (*hasa, paññā*), in terms of the joys that such knowledges bring; “**quick wisdom**” (*javana, paññā*), ie, he is quick in fully understanding the five aggregates; “**sharp wisdom**” (*tikkha, paññā*), ie, his wisdom cuts through defilements; “**penetrating wisdom**” (*nibbedhika, paññā*), ie, he is totally unattracted to any negative state, so that this wisdom liberates him (DA 3:932). This list of wisdoms and how they are attained are given in ch 7 (*mahā, paññā*) of **Sotāpatti Saṃyutta** (S 55.62-74/5:412 f).

<sup>303</sup> *Mahā, pañño hoti puṭhu, pañño hāsa, pañño javana, pañño tikkha, pañño nibbedhika, pañño, nāssa hoti koci paññāya sadiso vā seṭṭho vā sabba, sattānaṃ.*

- sussūsitā pabbajitaṃ upāsītā*  
*atth'antaro attha,kathaṃ nisāmayi*
- 2 *Paññā,paṭilābha,gatena kammunā*  
*manussa,bhūto sukhuma-c,chavī ahu*  
*vyākāmsu uppāda,nimitta,kovidā*  
*sukhumāni atthāni avecca dakkhiti*
- 3 *Sace na pabbajjam upeti tādiso*  
*vatteti cakkam pathaviṃ pasāsati*  
*atthānusiṭṭhīsu pariggahesu ca*  
*na tena seyyo sadiso ca vijjati [159]*
- 4 *Sace ca pabbajjam upeti tādiso*  
*nekkhama,chandābhirato vicakkaṇo*  
*paññā,visiṭṭhaṃ labhate anuttaraṃ*  
*pappoti bodhiṃ vara,bhūri,medhaso'ti*
- eager to learn [to hear], he served a renunciant,  
intent on good, intent on talk of the good.<sup>304</sup>
- By that karma, he obtains wisdom,  
in human form, he has delicate skin.  
The wise who read birth-signs predicted  
that he would wisely see refined good.
- If such a one does not turn to going forth,  
he, turning the wheel, will rule the earth,  
and of those who grasped the good that is taught,  
none is there better than him.
- If such a one were to take up the going-forth,  
wisely delighting in the desire for renunciation,  
he gains the supremely excellent wisdom,  
attains awakening as one noble widely wise.

### (9) Golden complexion (The 11<sup>th</sup> mark)

**1.28.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata was without anger, intent on not troubling others, speaking to the many without anger, not fixated on wrath or ill will, with neither anger nor ill will, not expressing discontent [sulkiness]. He was a giver of fine and soft coverlets and cloaks of fine linen, of fine cotton, of fine silk and of fine wool.<sup>305</sup>

**1.28.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, [177] after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains this mark of the great man:

**1.28.3** A golden complexion, with skin like gold.<sup>306</sup>

**1.29.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are the seven jewels, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**1.29.2** As a king, what does he get?

He receives fine and soft coverlets and cloaks of fine linen, of fine cotton, of fine silk and of fine wool.<sup>307</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

<sup>304</sup> Comy notes that *attha* here is pregnant with both the senses of the knowledge of “meaning or purpose of an instruction” (*atthānūsāna*) and of “what is beneficial and what is not” (*atthānattha*) (DA 3:933).

<sup>305</sup> From “without anger...” onwards: *akkodhano ahosi anupāyāsa,bahulo, bahum pi vutto samāno nābhisajji na kuppi na vyāpajji na patitthīyi, na kopaṇ ca dosaṇ ca appaccayaṇ ca pātv-ākāsi. Dātā ca ahosi sukhumānaṃ mudu-kānaṃ attharaṇānaṃ pāvuraṇānaṃ khoma,sukhumānaṃ kappāsika,sukhumānaṃ koseyya,sukhumānaṃ kambala,sukhumānaṃ.*

<sup>306</sup> *Suvaṇṇa,vaṇṇo hoti kañcana,sannibha-t,taco: §1.2.2(11).* Here, *kañcana* means “bright, shining, radiant (like gold)” (DA 2:447 ≈ MA 3:377; DA 3:933 f).

**1.29.3** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**1.29.4** As **the Buddha**, what does he get?

He receives fine and soft coverlets and cloaks of fine linen, of fine cotton, of fine silk and of fine wool. This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**1.30** In this matter, this was said:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1 <i>Akkodhañ ca adhiṭṭhahi adāsi<br/>dānañ ca vatthāni sukhumāni succhavīni [160]<br/>purimatara,bhave ṭhito abhivissaji<br/>mahim iva suro abhivassam</i></p>                     | <p>Determined in non-anger, and he gave gifts and delicate cloths, truly fine. In former lives, he stood pouring gifts like a god pouring rain upon the great earth.</p>                               |
| <p>2 <i>Tam katvāna ito cuto dibbam<br/>upapajji sukata,phala,vipākam anubhutvā<br/><br/>kanaka,tanu,sannibho idhābhivhavati<br/>sura,varataro-r-iva indo</i></p>                      | <p>Having done that, falling away from here, in heaven he was born, enjoying the fruits of his deeds well done. Here, he becomes one whose body is like gold, like Indra, the noblest of the gods.</p> |
| <p>3 <i>Gehañ cāvasati naro apabbajjam<br/>iccham mahati,mahim anusāsati<br/>pasayha sah 'idha satta,ratanam<sup>308</sup> paṭilabhati<br/>vimala,sukhuma-c,chaviṃ suciñ ca</i></p>    | <p>But if he lives in a house, not wishing to renounce, he would rule the great earth, having subdued it. Here he wins the seven jewels, and immaculate delicate pure skin, too;</p>                   |
| <p>4 <i>Lābhī acchādana,vattha,mokkha,pāvuraṇānam<sup>309</sup><br/>bhavati yadi anāgāriyataṃ upeti<br/>sahito purima,kata,phalam anubhavati<br/>na bhavati katassa panāso 'ti</i></p> | <p>he receives the best cloth, cloak and clothing. But if he resorts to the homeless life, he enjoys the fruit of good he has done before: for what's done is never lost.</p>                          |

### (10) Sheathed male organ (The 10<sup>th</sup> mark)

**1.31.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata reunited relatives and friends, long lost, long separated from home, with loved ones and friends, uniting mother with child, child with mother, father [161] with child, child with father, brother with brother, brother with sister, sister with brother, sister with sister, rejoicing in bringing them together.<sup>310</sup>

**1.31.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains this mark of the great man:

**1.31.3** Sheathed male organs.<sup>311</sup>

<sup>307</sup> *Lābhī hoti sukhumānam mudukānam attharaṇānam pāvuraṇānam khoma,sukhumānam kappāsika,sukhumānam koseyya,sukhumānam kambala,sukhumānam.*

<sup>308</sup> *Be Ke sah 'idha satta,ratanam; Ce Ee abhivasana,varataram.*

<sup>309</sup> *So Be; Ee pāpuraṇānam.*

<sup>310</sup> From “united relatives and friends...” onwards: *Cira-p,panaṭṭhe sucira-p,pavāsino ñāti,mitte suhajje sakhino samānetā ahoṣi.* For further comments related to “the sheathed male organ,” see Powers 2009:12 f.

<sup>311</sup> *Kos'ohita,vattha,guyha:* §1.2.2(10). His male organ is (well-sheathed) like a bull's (*usabha,vāraṇ'ādi*), like the pericarp of a golden lotus (*suvaṇṇa,paduma,kañṇika,sadisa*) (DA 2:447 ≈ MA 3:377; DA 3:934 f). For discussion, see Powers 2009:13 f.

**1.32.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are the seven jewels, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**1.32.2** As a king, what does he get?

Numerous sons, over a thousand sons are his, brave, heroic in stature, defeating the enemies on the other side.<sup>312</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**1.32.3** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**1.32.4** As the Buddha, what does he get?

Numerous sons, many hundred sons are his, brave, heroic in stature, defeating the enemies on the other side.<sup>313</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**1.33** In this matter, this was said:

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | <i>Pure puratthā purimāsu jātisu<br/>cira-p,panaṭṭhe sucira-p,pavāsino<br/>ñātī suhajje sakhino samānaya<br/>samaṅgi,katvā anumoditā ahu</i>                 | Long ago in times past, in previous births,<br>those who had lost and long sought<br>their true-hearted relatives and friends,<br>rejoicing, he brought them together.       |
| 2 | <i>So tena kammaṇa divaṃ samakkami<br/>sukhañ ca khiddā,ratiyo ca anvabhi<br/>tato cavitvā punar-āgato idha<br/>kos'ohitaṃ vindati vattha,chādiyaṃ</i> [162] | By that karma, he reached heaven,<br>and enjoyed happiness and playful delight.<br>From there, he fell and is reborn here,<br>his cloth-covered is hidden in a sheath.       |
| 3 | <i>Pahūta,putto bhavati tathā,vidho<br/>paro,sahassaṃ ca bhavanti atrajā<br/>sūrā ca vīrā ca amitta,tāpanā<br/>gihissa pītim jananaṃ piyaṃ,vadā</i>          | On account of that, a great many sons are his,<br>and over a thousand daughters, too,<br>brave, heroic and subduing foes,<br>joy-makers of householders, pleasant in speech. |
| 4 | <i>Bahūtarā pabbajitassa iriyato<br/>bhavanti puttā vacanānusārino<br/>gihissa vā pabbajitassa vā puna<br/>taṃ lakkhaṇaṃ jāyati tad-attha,jotakan'ti</i>     | If he turns to renunciation, even much more<br>are his sons, living in keeping with his word,<br>householders, too, and renunciants.<br>This mark will shine on his goal.    |

[The first recital (division) ends here. *Paṭhama,bhāṇavāro niṭṭhito*]

## (11) Banyan-like proportions & knee-long arms (The 19<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> mark)

**2.1.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata had regard for the welfare of the masses, knowing each and everyone for himself, knowing the uniqueness of each person, thus: 'This one is worthy of this, this one is worthy of that,' he is aware of each person's difference.<sup>314</sup>

<sup>312</sup> *Pahūta,putto hoti, paro,sahassaṃ kho pana'ssa puttā bhavanti sūrā vīr'aṅga,rūpā para,sena-p.pamaddanā.*

<sup>313</sup> *Pahūta,putto hoti, aneka,sahassaṃ kho pan'assa puttā bhavanti sūrā vīr'aṅga,rūpā para,sena-p.pamaddanā.*

**2.1.2 THE DIVINE REFRAIN.** *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains this mark of the great man:

**2.1.3 Body proportions of a banyan tree.** While standing, without bending, he can touch and stroke his knees with both his hands.<sup>315</sup>

**2.2.1 THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN.** *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**2.2.2 As a king**, what does he get? [163]

He is wealthy, greatly wealthy, with much gold and silver, with much possessions and means, much riches and grain, with a full treasury.<sup>316</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**2.2.3 THE BUDDHA REFRAIN.** *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**2.2.4 As the Buddha**, what does he get?

THE BUDDHA'S SEVEN NOBLE TREASURES.<sup>317</sup> He is wealthy, greatly wealthy. These are his treasures, that is to say: the treasure that is *faith*, the treasure that is *moral virtue*, the treasure that is *moral shame*, the treasure that is *moral fear*, the treasure that is *learning*, the treasure that is *charity*, and the treasure that is *wisdom*.<sup>318</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**2.3** In this matter, this was said:<sup>319</sup>

<p>1 <i>Tuliya</i><sup>320</sup> <i>paṭivicaya</i><sup>321</sup> <i>cintayitvā</i> <i>mahājāna</i>,<sup>322</sup> <i>saṅgahanam</i><sup>323</sup> <i>samekkhamāno</i> <i>ayam idam arahatī</i><sup>324</sup> <i>tattha tattha</i> <i>purisa,visesa</i>,<sup>325</sup> <i>karo pure ahosi</i></p>	<p>Weighing, examining, thinking, having regard for the welfare of the masses, here and there, thus: 'This one is worthy of that': he was first to inspire excellence in people.</p>
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<sup>314</sup> From "had regard for the welfare...etc" onwards: *Mahā,jana,saṅgahanam samekkhamāno samam jānāti sāmam jānāti, purisam jānāti purisa,visesam jānāti, 'ayam idam arahati ayam idam arahatī'ti tattha tattha purisa,visesa, -karo ahosi.*

<sup>315</sup> *Nigrodha,parimaṇḍalo ca hoti, thitako,yeva ca anonamanto ubhohi pāṇitalehi jaṇṇukāni parimasati parimaj-jati:* §1.2.2(19). A banyan tree is traditionally known to be similar in height and breadth, even so the great man, too (DA 2:449 ≈ MA 3:380; DA 3:935 f).

<sup>316</sup> *Aḍḍho hoti mah'addhano mahā,bhogo pahūta,jāta.rūpa,rajato pahūta,vittūpakaraṇo pahūta,dhana,dhañño paripuṇṇa,kosa,koṭṭh'āgāro.*

<sup>317</sup> *Satta ariya,dhana* (D 30.2.2/3:163, 33.2.3/3:267; A 7.5+6/4:4 f; UA 285; cf Thī 342). See also **Right livelihood** = SD 36.10 (2.3.9).

<sup>318</sup> *Aḍḍho hoti mah'addhano mahābhogo. Tass'imāni dhanāni honti, seyyath'idam: saddhā'dhanam sīla'dhanam hiri'dhanam ottappa'dhanam suta'dhanam cāga'dhanam paññā'dhanam.*

<sup>319</sup> For a rev reading & metrical study of these 4 verses, see Norman 1984 & 1987-88.

<sup>320</sup> Be *Se tuliya*; Ee *tulaya*.

<sup>321</sup> Be *paṭivicaya*; ce *paṭiviciya*; Ee *paviceyya*; Se *pavicaya*.

<sup>322</sup> Here *mahā* mc; Be Ee Se *mahā*-.

<sup>323</sup> Be *saṅgahakam*; Ce *saṅgahanam*; Ee *saṅgahatam*; Se *saṅgāhakam*.

<sup>324</sup> Ee *arahatī*; Be *arahati*.

- 2 *Mahiṅ*<sup>326</sup> *ca pana ṭhito*<sup>327</sup> *anonamanto*  
*phusati karehi ubhohi jaṅṅukāni*<sup>328</sup>  
*mahi,ruha,parimaṇḍalo*<sup>329</sup> *ahosi*  
*sucarita,kamma,vipāka,sesakena*
- 3 *Bahu,vividha,nimitta,lakkhaṇ'aññū*  
*atinipunā*<sup>330</sup> *manujā vyākarimsu*<sup>331</sup>  
*bahu,vividhā*<sup>332</sup> *gihīnam*<sup>333</sup> *arahāni*<sup>334</sup>  
*paṭilabhati daharo susu*<sup>335</sup> *kumāro* [164]
- 4 *Idha ca*<sup>336</sup> *mahī,*<sup>337</sup> *patissa kāma,bhogī*<sup>338</sup>  
*gihi,*<sup>339</sup> *patirūpakā*<sup>340</sup> *bahū*<sup>341</sup> *bhavanti*  
*yadi ca jahati sabba,*<sup>342</sup> *kāma,bhogam*  
*labhati anuttaram uttama,*<sup>343</sup> *dhan'aggan'ti*
- And so standing on the ground, without bending,  
he is able to touch his knees with both hands.  
Like a great tree is his measure all around,  
on account of the remnants of his deeds well done.
- Those who know various signs and marks,  
greatly wise amongst men, predicted that  
many things worthy of a householder,  
this tender young boy will receive.
- And here the earth-lord enjoys pleasures  
in large measure, befitting a householder.  
But if he forsakes all pleasure and wealth,  
he will attain a wealth supreme, highest, foremost  
wealth.

## (12) Leonine front, well-rounded shoulders & chest (The 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> marks)

**2.4.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata had the desire for the benefit of the many, the desire for their good, the desire for their comfort, the desire for their freedom from the yoke, considering how they might increase *their faith, their moral virtue, their learning, their charity, their righteousness, their wisdom*, their wealth and grain, their field and land, their two-legged and four-legged animals, the sons and women of their family, their slaves, workers, and men, their relatives, their friends, their kinsmen.<sup>344</sup>

**2.4.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

<sup>325</sup> Ee -visesa-; Se -visesañ-.

<sup>326</sup> Be mahiṅ; ce sa hi; Se samā; WT mahiṅ.

<sup>327</sup> Se -ṭṭhito.

<sup>328</sup> Ee jannukāni; Be Ce jaṅṅukāni.

<sup>329</sup> Ee parimaṇḍalo; Se -pparimaṇḍalo.

<sup>330</sup> Ee abhinipunā; Be atinipunā.

<sup>331</sup> Be Ee Se vyākarimsu; Ce viyākarimsu.

<sup>332</sup> Be -vividhā; Ce -vividhāni.

<sup>333</sup> Be gihīnam; Ce gihīnam-; Se gihina.

<sup>334</sup> Be Ce Se arahāni; Ee arahāni.

<sup>335</sup> Be Ce Ee susu; Se susū.

<sup>336</sup> So Se; Ce Ee omit ca.

<sup>337</sup> Be Ce mahī-; Ee mahi-.

<sup>338</sup> Be Ce Se -bhogī; Ee -bhogā.

<sup>339</sup> Ce gihi-; Ee Se gihi-.

<sup>340</sup> Ce Ee paṭirūpakā; Se patirūpakarā.

<sup>341</sup> Ce bahū; Ee bahū.

<sup>342</sup> Ce sabba-; Ee sabbam.

<sup>343</sup> Be uttama-; Ee -uttamam-; Ce -uttamam.

<sup>344</sup> From “had the desire for the benefit” onwards: *bahu,janassa attha,kāmo ahosi hita,kāmo phāsu,kāmo yoga-k,-khema,kāmo: 'kin t'ime saddhāya vaḍḍheyyum, sīlena vaḍḍheyyum, sutena vaḍḍheyyum, cāgena vaḍḍheyyum, dhammena vaḍḍheyyum, paññāya vaḍḍheyyum, dhana,dhaññena vaḍḍheyyum, khetta,vatthunā vaḍḍheyyum, dvi.pada,catu-p.padehi vaḍḍheyyum, putta,dārehi vaḍḍheyyum, dāsa,kamma.kara,porisehi vaḍḍheyyum, ñātīhi vaḍḍheyyum, mittehi vaḍḍheyyum, bandhavehi vaḍḍheyyun'ti.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains these three marks of the great man:

**2.4.3 His body-front that is like a lion's; no furrow between his shoulders; and a well-rounded chest rounded.**<sup>345</sup>

**2.5.1 THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN.** *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**2.5.2 As a king, what does he get? [165]**

THE WHEEL-TURNER'S CONDITIONS OF NON-DECLINE. He does not decline in terms of wealth and grain, in terms of field and land, in terms of two-legged and four-legged animals, in terms of sons and women of his family, slaves, workers and men, in terms of relatives, in terms of friends, in terms of kinsmen, but is fulfilled in them all.<sup>346</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**2.5.3 THE BUDDHA REFRAIN.** *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**2.5.4 As the Buddha, what does he get?**

THE BUDDHA'S CONDITIONS OF NON-DECLINE. He does not decline in terms of faith, virtue, learning, charity and wisdom, but is fulfilled in all of them.<sup>347</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**2.6** In this matter, this was said:

1 *Saddhāya sīlena sutena buddhiyā  
cāgena dhammena bahūhi sādhuhi  
dhanena dhaññena ca khetta, vatthunā  
puttehi dārehi catu-p, padehi ca*

Wise through faith, moral virtue, learning,  
charity and righteousness, great and good,  
in wealth, grain, fields and land, too,  
and sons, women, and the four-legged, too,

2 *Ñātīhi mittehi ca bandhavehi ca  
balena vaṇṇena sukkena cūbhayaṃ  
kathaṃ na hāyeyyūṃ pare'ti icchati  
attha-s, samiddhī ca panābhikāṅkhati*

relatives, friends, kinsmen, too,  
and strength, beauty, and safety, too.  
'How now that others not suffer loss?' he wished,  
so he desired their benefit and success.

3 *Sa sīha, pubb'addha, susaṅṭhito ahu  
sama, vaṭṭa, khandho ca cit'antar-aṃso  
pubbe suciṇṇena katena kammunā  
ahāniyaṃ pubba, nimittam assa taṃ*

Like that of a lion's is his front, well-built,  
and his shoulders even rounded, furrowless,  
by good karma well done in the past:  
this birth-sign of his does not wane.

<sup>345</sup> *Sīha, pubb'addha, kāyo ca hoti* [§1.2.2(17)] *cit'anta, raṃso ca* [§1.2.2(18)] *sama, vaṭṭa-k, khandho ca* [§1.2.2(20)]. Although the back of a lion does not curve, the whole of the great man's body curves in a full and harmonious manner. His upper back has no depression between the shoulders, and from the small of the back upwards, the flesh looks like a smooth golden slab. His neck, ie, the exterior of his vocal apparatus, are similarly well fleshed and harmonious. (DA 2:448 f ≈ MA 3:379 f; DA 3:936).

<sup>346</sup> *Aparihāna, dhammo hoti, na parihāyati dhana, dhaññena khetta, vatthunā dvi.pada, catu-p.padehi putta, dārehi dāsa, kamma, kara, porisehi ñātīhi mittehi bandhavehi, na parihāyati sabba, sampattiyā.* On various sets of 7 conditions of non-decline (*satta aparihāna, dhamma*), see **Mahā, parinibbāna S** (D 16.1.6-10/2:76-79) = SD 9.

<sup>347</sup> *Aparihāna, dhammo hoti, na parihāyati saddhāya sīlena sutena cāgena paññāya, na parihāyati sabba, sampattiyā.*



- 4 *Gihī'pi dhaññena dhanena vaḍḍhati  
puttehi dārehi catu-p,padehi ca  
akiñcano pabbajito anuttaram  
pappoti bodhim asahāna,dhammatan'ti* [166] As a householder, too, his wealth and grain grow,  
and children, women, and the four-legged, too.  
As a renunciant with nothing, supreme,  
he attains awakening, by nature undiminishing.<sup>348</sup>

### (13) Perfect sense of taste (The 21<sup>st</sup> mark)

**2.7.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata habitually harmed no living beings, showing then no violence, using neither rod nor sword.<sup>349</sup>

**2.7.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains this mark of the great man:

**2.7.3 A perfect sense of taste.** Whatever is at his tongue's tip is felt in the throat and pervades throughout.<sup>350</sup>

**2.8.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are the seven jewels, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**2.8.2** As a king, what does he get?

He is free from sickness, free from pain. He has a good digestion. (He feels) neither too cold nor too warm.<sup>351</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**2.8.3** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**2.8.4** As the Buddha, what does he get?

He is free from sickness, free from pain. He has a good digestion. (He feels) neither too cold nor too warm, equable, conducive to striving.<sup>352</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**2.9** In this matter, this was said:

- 1 *Na pāṇi,daṇḍehi panātha leḍḍunā<sup>353</sup>  
satthena vā maraṇa,vadhena vā pana  
ubbādhanāya paritajjanāya vā  
na heṭhayī janatam aheṭhako ahu* Without rod in hand, nor violence, too,  
without sword, nor death nor murder,  
nor troubling, nor threatening,  
nor harming—he was harmless to the people.

<sup>348</sup> “By nature undiminishing,” *a-sahāna,dhammatā*, glossed as “by nature, not declining” (*aparihāna,dhammatā*, DA 3:936,24): see CPD sv.

<sup>349</sup> From “habitually harmed no living beings...” onwards: *sattānaṃ aviheṭhaka,jātiko ahosi pāṇinā vā leḍḍunā vā dandena vā satthena vā*.

<sup>350</sup> *Ras'aggas-aggī hoti, uddh'aggāssa rasa,haraṇīyo gīvāya jātā honti samābhivāhīniyo* [§1.2.2(21)]. The meaning is that whatever food the Buddha takes, he is able to enjoy their taste to the fullest. DA 2:449 ≈ MA 3:380 f; DA 3:936. Skt *rasa,rasāgravān*, cf BHSD 453 f.

<sup>351</sup> *Appābādho hoti app'ātānko, sama,vepākiniyā gahaṇiyā samannāgato nātisītāya nāccuṇhāya*.

<sup>352</sup> “Equable,...etc.,” *majjhimāya padhāna-k,khamāya*.

<sup>353</sup> So Be; Ee *na pāṇinā na ca pana daṇḍa,leḍḍunā*, “without the rod of violence towards living beings, too.”

- 2 *Ten'eva so sugatim upecca modati  
sukha-p,phalam kariya sukhāni vindati [167]  
samojasā<sup>354</sup> rasa,haraṇī susaṅṅhitā  
idh'āgato labhati ras'agga-s-aggitam* As such, he went on to rejoice in heaven;  
he finds joy from the happy fruits of his deeds,  
his taste-bringer is perfect and well-formed:  
here, he comes and gains a perfect sense of taste.
- 3 *Ten'āhu nam atinipuṇā vicakkhaṇā  
ayaṃ naro sukha,bahulo bhavissati  
gihissa vā pabbajitassa vā puna  
tam lakkhaṇam bhavati tad attha,jotakan'ti* Thus it is said that he is set to be the finest,  
this man who will be happy in a great way,  
and so too for householders and renunciants:  
this mark will shine on his goal.

#### (14) Deep bluish-black eyes & long eye-lashes (The 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> marks)

**2.10.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata did not stare at someone (in disapproval), nor did he look at someone in askance, nor looked through the corner of the eyes (in suspicion). But he looked directly and intently, surveying the masses with loving eyes.<sup>355</sup>

**2.10.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains these two marks of the great man:

**2.10.3** Deep bluish-black eyes<sup>356</sup> and eye-lashes (long and shapely) like a cow's.<sup>357</sup>

**2.11.1** REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [wheel-turning king], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are the seven jewels, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

<sup>354</sup> So Be; vll *sāmañcassa, sāmañcasā*; Ce Ee *sampajassa*; Ke *pānuñjasā*; Se *sanojasātipi*. Is there a possibility that we take it as *sam-oja-sā* (as in *teja-sā*), “capable of tasting ambrosia”?

<sup>355</sup> From “does not stare...” onwards: *na ca visaṭam, na ca visāci* [so Be Ce; Se *visāvī*; Ee *visācitam*], *na ca pana viceyya pekkhitā, ujum tathā pasaṭam ujumano, piya,cakkhunā bahu,janam udikkhitā ahoṣi*. Tr is conjectural based on Comy: “**does not stare**” means he does not, having dismissed someone, look on, “with crab-like eye,” on account of anger (*kakkaṭako piya akkhini nīharitvā na kodha,vasena pekkhitā ahoṣi*). “**(Does) not look ... in askance**” means he does not look on obliquely through the eye's corner (*vaṅk'akkhi,koṭiyā pekkhitā'pi nāhoṣi*). “**(Does) not look through the corner of the eyes**” means whenever he looks at others, he does not do so in anger with discerning eyes, then shutting his eyes, walking in anger, looks on again: this is not the case (*viceyya pekkhitā nāma yo kujjhitvā yadā nam paro oloketi, tadā nimmīleti na oloketi, puna gacchantam kujjhitvā oloketi, eva,rūpo nāhoṣi*). The word *vineyya,pekkhitā* has the same sense. (DA 3:937).

<sup>356</sup> *Abhinīla,netto ca hoti* [§1.2.2(29)] (DA 2:451 ≈ MA 3:384; DA 3:937). “Deep bluish-black,” *abhi,nīla*, where DP def *nīla* as “of a dark colour, esp dark blue, blue-black; dark green; blue-green.” Culturally, in the Buddha's time at least, *nīla* covered a range of colours from cloud-grey to black and from bluer to green. In other words, it is the colours of the seas, lakes, rivers, and the skies, the most spacious of colours. This covers a range of about 400-510 nanometres of the light spectrum wavelength: [http://eosweb.larc.nasa.gov/EDDOCS/Wavelengths\\_for\\_Colors.html](http://eosweb.larc.nasa.gov/EDDOCS/Wavelengths_for_Colors.html). The prefix *abhi-* gives strength to it, making it “deep, dark and radiant.” DP def *abhinīla* as “very dark in colour; deep black.” See [4.5.2-3]. On the key role that the Buddha's eyes play in the 5 colours of Buddha's halo, see Endo 1997: 148-153. On the possible historical influence of Alexander the Great's heterochromia iridum, see (4.2.1.1).

<sup>357</sup> *Go,pakhumo ca* [§1.2.2(30)]. His eye-lashes are thick like a cow's, surrounding the whole eye, yet bright and soft like a new born calf's (DA 2:451 ≈ MA 3:384; DA 3:937).

**2.11.2** As a **king**, what does he get?

He is loved on sight. He is loved by the masses, charming to brahmin householders, market-townsfolk and countryfolk, [168] accountants and chief ministers, body-guards, door-keepers, ministers, courtiers, vassals, and royal sons.<sup>358</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**2.11.3** As **the Buddha**, what does he get?

He is loved on sight. He is loved by the masses, charming to monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, gods, humans, nagas and gandharvas.<sup>359</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**2.12** In this matter, this was said:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1 <i>Na ca viṣaṭaṃ na ca visāci<br/>na ca pana viceyya,pekkhitā<br/>ujuṃ tathā paṣaṭaṃ ujumano<br/>piya,cakkhunā bahu,janaṃ udikkhitā</i></p>             | <p>Nor staring, nor looking with a squint,<br/>nor through the eye's corner, suspecting,<br/>naturally straight, looking straight and intent,<br/>with loving eye, he surveyed the masses.</p>         |
| <p>2 <i>Sugatīsu so phala,vipākaṃ<br/>anubhavati tattha modati<br/>idha ca pana bhavati go,pakhumo<br/>abhinīla,netta,nayano sudassano</i></p>               | <p>The fruits of his karma, in heaven<br/>he experienced and enjoyed them,<br/>and here he has eye-lashes like those of a cow's,<br/>and his eyes, a deep bluish-black, good for looking.</p>          |
| <p>3 <i>Abhiyogino ca nipuṇā<br/>bahū pana nimitta,kovidā<br/>sukhuma,nayana,kusalā manujā<br/>piya,dassano 'ti abhiniddisanti naṃ</i></p>                   | <p>The great fine yogis,<br/>wise in signs, many of them, too,<br/>men with sharp eyes for fine detail<br/>point him out as one who is loving to behold,</p>   |
| <p>4 <i>Piya,dassano gihī'pi santo ca<br/>bhavati bahu,jana,piyāyito [169]<br/>yadi ca na bhavati gihī samaṇo hoti<br/>piyo bahūnaṃ soka,nāsano 'ti.</i></p> | <p>lovely to behold as a householder, too, one at peace,<br/>he is beloved of the masses,<br/>and if he is not a householder, he would be a recluse,<br/>beloved of the many, destroyed of sorrow.</p> |

**(15) Turban-like head (The 32<sup>nd</sup> mark)**

**2.13.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata was one who led (the hearts) of the masses, a leader of the masses in wholesome states, in purity of the body, purity of speech, and purity of the mind, who had a share in giving, who kept to the precepts of moral virtue, who observed the precept day [the uposatha], who honoured mother, father, recluse, brahmin, the eldest in the family in accordance to wholesome duties in one way or another.<sup>360</sup>

**2.13.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed*

<sup>358</sup> *Piya,dassano hoti bahuno janassa, piyo hoti manāpo brāhmaṇa,gahapatikānaṃ negama,jānapadānaṃ gaṇa-ka,mahāmatānaṃ anīkaṭṭhānaṃ dovārikānaṃ amaccānaṃ pārisajjānaṃ rājūnaṃ bhogiyānaṃ kumārānaṃ.*

<sup>359</sup> *Piya,dassano hoti bahuno janassa, piyo hoti manāpo bhikkhūnaṃ bhikkhunīnaṃ upāsakānaṃ upāsikānaṃ devānaṃ manussānaṃ asurānaṃ nāgānaṃ gandhabbānaṃ.*

<sup>360</sup> From "is one who leads (the hearts) of the masses..." onwards: *bahu,jana,pubb 'aṅgamo ahoṣi kusalesu dhammesu bahu,jana,pāmoḁkko kāya,sucarite vacī,sucarite mano,sucarite dāna,samvibhāge sīla,samādāne uposath 'upavāse matteyyatāya petteyyatāya sāmāññatāya brahmaññatāya kule jeṭṭh 'āpacāyitāya aññatar 'aññataresu ca adhikusalesu dhammesu.* I have tr *adhikusalesu dhammesu* as "in accordance to wholesome duties," taking *adhi* as equivalent to *abhi*, as in the Nikāyas, *abhidhamma*, eg, means "concerning the Dharma," often in combination with *abhinaya* (V 1:64 = 181; M 1:472, 2:239; A 1:289, 5:24): I B Horner, "Abhidhamma abhinaya in the first two of the Pali Canon," *Indian Historical Quarterly* 17,3 1941:291-310: <http://www.buddhanet.net/budsas/ebud/ebsut064.htm>.

other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains this mark of the great man:

### 2.13.3 A turban-like head.<sup>361</sup>

**2.14.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

### 2.14.2 As a king, what does he get?

The populace are his followers: brahmin householders, market-townsfolk and countryfolk, accountants and chief ministers, body-guards, door-keepers, ministers, courtiers, vassals, and royal sons.<sup>362</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**2.14.3** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

### 2.14.4 As the Buddha, what does he get?

The populace are his followers: monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, gods, humans, nagas and gandharvas.<sup>363</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

### 2.15 In this matter, this was said:

1 *Pubbañ,gamo sucaritesu ahu  
dhammesu dhamma,cariyābhirato  
anvāyiko bahu,janassa ahu  
saggesu vedayittha puñña,phalaṃ [170]*

Of those good in conduct, he is the foremost;  
he enjoyed practising the Dharma in the Dharma;  
the masses were his followers;  
in heaven, he enjoyed the fruits of his merits.

2 *Veditvā so sucaritassa phalaṃ  
uñhīsa,sīs'attam idh'ajjhagamā  
vyākamsu vyañjana,nimitta,dharā  
pubbaṅgamo bahu,janaṃ hessati*

Having enjoyed the fruits of his deeds well done,  
he attains here a turban-like head for himself,  
the experts in signs and marks forecast  
that he will be ahead leading the people.

3 *Paṭibhogiyā manujesu idha  
pubb'eva tassa abhiharanti tadā  
yadi khattiyo bhavati bhūmi,pati  
paṭihārakaṃ bahu,jane labhati*

Here, amongst humans, he is safe [is served],  
even in the past, too, they served him such:  
if he is a kshatriya, he would be lord of the earth,  
winning supporters from the masses.

4 *Atha ce'pi pabbajati so manujo  
dhammesu hoti paguṇo visavī*

But if this man renounces the world,  
he would be one practised and versed in the Dharma.

<sup>361</sup> *Uñhīsa,sīsa* [§1.2.2(32)]. Buddhaghosa explains this as referring to a pad of flesh across the Buddha's forehead and extending to the ears' base, ie the fullness of the cranium. The turban symbolizes royal power. He also says that the Buddha's head is perfectly spherical like a bubble (*suparipuñṇam udaka,pubbuḷa,sadisam sīsam hoti*) (DA 2:452 ≈ MA 3:385 f; DA 3:937 f). It is depicted iconographically as a protruberance on the crown. **Donald Lopez** discusses the controversy regarding this and other marks, 2005:20-34.

<sup>362</sup> *Mahā'ssa jano anvāyiko hoti, brāhmaṇa,gahapatikā negama,jānapadā gaṇaka,mahāmattā anīkaṭṭhā dovārikā amaccā pārisajjā rājāno bhogiyā kumārā.*

<sup>363</sup> *Mahā'ssa jano anvāyiko hoti, bhikkhū bhikkhuniyo upāsakā upāsikāyo devā manussā asurā nāgā gandhabbā.*

*tassānusāsānī guṇābhirato  
anvāyiko bahu,jano bhavatī'ti.*

Delighting in the virtues of instruction,  
the people will be his followers.

### (16) Single body-hairs & hair-whorl between eye-brows (13<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> marks)

**2.16.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata, having given up false speech, abstained from false speech, told the truth, kept to the truth as his bond, trustworthy, reliable, no deceiver of the world.<sup>364</sup>

**2.16.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains these two marks of the great man:

**2.16.3** **Single and separate body-hairs**, one to a pore; and **hair between his eye-brows** that is white, soft like cotton-down.<sup>365</sup>

**2.17.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**2.17.2** As a **king**, what does he get?

The populace follow his wishes: brahmin householders, market-townsfolk [171] and countryfolk, accountants and chief ministers, body-guards, door-keepers, ministers, courtiers, vassals, and royal sons.<sup>366</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**2.17.3** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**2.17.4** As **the Buddha**, what does he get?

The populace follow his wishes: monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, gods, humans, nagas and gandharvas.<sup>367</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**2.18** In this matter, this was said:

1 *Sacca-p,paṭiñño purimāsu jātisu  
advejjha,vāco alikaṃ vivajjayi  
na so visaṃvādayitāpi kassaci  
bhūtena tacchena tathena bhāsaya*

In past lives, he was a proclaimer of truth,  
no two ways was his word, who rejected falsehood,  
but one who never broke his word at all,  
whatever he said was true, real and factual.

<sup>364</sup> From “having given up false speech,...” onwards: *musā,vādam pahāya musā,vādā paṭivirato ahoṣi, sacca,vādī sacca,sandho theto paccayiko avisaṃvādako lokassa*. This is stock, found eg in all the first 13 suttas of Dīgha, eg **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2.44/1:64) = SD 8.10.

<sup>365</sup> *Ek'eka,lomo ca hoti* [§1.2.2(13)], *uṇṇā ca bhamuk'antare jātā hoti odātā mudu,tūla,sannibhā* [§1.2.2(31)]. Buddhaghosa says that this whorl of hair (*uṇṇā*), when extended, is half the length of his arm. It always stays coiled rightwise, pointing outwards and “shines like a silver bubble on a gold ingot, a truly pleasant radiance like Venus (*suvanṇa,phalaka,majjhe ṭhapita,rajata,pubbuḷakaṃ viya, suvaṇṇa,ghaṭato...osadhi,tārakā viya ca atimanoharāya siriya virocati*, DA 2:451). DA 2:451 ≈ MA 3:384; DA 3:938. DA 2 & MA 3 give no comy on *ek'eka,loma*.

<sup>366</sup> *Mahā'ssa jano upavattati, brāhmaṇa'gahapatikā negama'jānapadā gaṇaka'mahāmatā anīkaṭṭhā dovārikā amaccā pārisajjā rājāno bhogiyā kumārā*.

<sup>367</sup> *Mahā'ssa jano upavattati, bhikkhū bhikkhuniyo upāsakā upāsikāyo devā manussā asurā nāgā gandhabbā*.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>2 <i>Setā susukkā mudu, tūla, sannibhā<br/>uñṇā sujātā bhamuk'antare ahu<br/>na loma, kūpesu duve ajāyisum<br/>ek'eka, lomūpacit'aṅgavā ahu</i></p>            | <p>White, lustrous, soft like cotton down,<br/>is the well-formed the hair between his eye-brows.<br/>No two hair ever arise in a pore,<br/>singly his hair grows on the body.</p>            |
| <p>3 <i>Tam lakkhaṇ'aññū bahavo samāgatā<br/>vyākamsu uppāda, nimitta, kovidā<br/>uñṇā ca lomā ca yathā susaṅṅhitā<br/>upavattatī īdisakam bahu-j, jano</i></p>   | <p>When the many sign-knowers assembled,<br/>those skilled in birth-signs predicted that<br/>one with an <i>urṇa</i> and such hair well formed,<br/>the masses would approach such a one.</p> |
| <p>4 <i>Gihim pi santam upavattatī jano<br/>bahu purattha, pakatena kammunā<br/>akiñcanam pabbajitam anuttaram<br/>buddham pi santam upavattati jano 'ti.</i></p> | <p>As a householder, too, people will approach him;<br/>through much karma formerly accrued.<br/>A renunciant supreme, with nothing,<br/>the Buddha, at peace—the people turn to him.</p>     |

### (17) Full forty teeth with no spaces in between (The 23<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> marks)

**2.19.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata, having given up divisive speech, abstained from divisive speech. What he had heard here he did not tell there to break those people apart from these people here. What he had heard there [172] he did not tell here to break these people apart from those people there. Thus reconciling those who had broken apart or consolidating those who were united, he loved concord, delighted in concord, enjoyed concord, spoke words of concord.<sup>368</sup>

**2.19.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains these two marks of the great man:

**2.19.3 Full forty teeth and the teeth without any space in between.**<sup>369</sup>

**2.20.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are the seven jewels, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**2.20.2** As a king, what does he get?

His followers are undivided. His undivided followers are brahmin householders, market-townsfolk and countryfolk, accountants and chief ministers, body-guards, door-keepers, ministers, courtiers, vassals, and royal sons.<sup>370</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

<sup>368</sup> From “having given up divisive speech,...” onwards: *pisuṇam vācam pahāya pisuṇāya vācāya paṭivirato ahoṣi. Ito sutvā na amutra akkhātā imesaṃ bhedāya, amutra vā sutvā na imesaṃ akkhātā amūsaṃ bhedāya, iti bhinnānam vā sandhātā, sahitānam vā anuppadātā, samagg'ārāmo samagga, rato samagga, nandī samagga, karaṇim vācam bhāsītā ahoṣi.* This is stock, found eg in all the first 13 suttas of Dīgha, eg **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2.44/1:64) = SD 8.10.

<sup>369</sup> *Cattālīsa, danto ca hoti* [§1.2.2(23)] *aviraḷa, danto ca* [§1.2.2(25)]. He has 20 teeth in each jaw (ie 8 more than an ordinary person) (DA 2:450 ≈ MA 3:381; DA 3:938). We are not told how the augurs knew the infant destined to be a great man has these 40 teeth.

**2.20.3** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**2.20.4** As **the Buddha**, what does he get?

His followers are undivided. His undivided followers are monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, gods, humans, nagas and gandharvas.<sup>371</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**2.21** In this matter, this was said:

- |   |   |       |  |
|---|---|-------|--|
| 1 | <i>Vebhūtiyaṃ sahita, bheda, kāriṃ<br/>bheda-p, pavaḍḍhana, vivāda, kāriṃ<br/>kalaha-p, pavaḍḍhana, ākicca, kāriṃ<br/>sahitānaṃ bheda, jananiṃ na bhaṇi</i> |       | He is not slanderous, <sup>372</sup> dividing the united,<br>causing quarrels ending in division,<br>doing what should not be done, fuelling disputes:<br>he spoke not to cause division amongst the united. |
| 2 | <i>Avivāda, vaḍḍhana, kariṃ sugiraṃ<sup>373</sup><br/>bhinnānusandhi, jananiṃ abhaṇi</i>  | [173] | His well-spoken words promoted no quarrel,<br>he spoke to bring closure amongst the divided,<br>he resolved the people's disputes,<br>delighting and pleasing them with unity.                               |
| 3 | <i>Sugatīsu so phala, vipākāṃ<br/>anubhavati tatha modati<br/>dantā idha honti aviraḷā sahitā<br/>caturo dasassa mukhajā susaṅṅhitā</i>                     |       | In heaven, his karmic fruits<br>he enjoyed and rejoiced there.<br>Here, his teeth are unbroken, close together,<br>full forty teeth well formed in his mouth.  |
| 4 | <i>Yadi khattiyo bhavati bhūmi, pati<br/>avibhediyaṃsa parisā bhavati<br/>samaṇo ca hoti virajo vimalo<br/>parisāssa hoti anugataṃ acalā 'ti</i>            |       | If he is a kshatriya, he becomes earth's lord,<br>unbreakable is his followings.<br>If he is a recluse, he is dust-free and stainless,<br>his assembly, too, follows unshakable.                             |

### (18) A long tongue and perfect voice (The 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> marks)

**2.22.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata, having given up abusive speech, abstained from abusive speech. He spoke words that were humane, soothing, loving, touching, urbane, and delightful and pleasant to the multitude.<sup>374</sup>

**2.22.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains these two marks of the great man:

**2.22.3** A long tongue<sup>375</sup> and a perfect voice (like Brahma's).<sup>376</sup>

<sup>370</sup> *Abhejja, parisō hoti, abhejjā'ssa honti parisā, brāhmaṇa, gahapatikā negama, jānapadā gaṇaka, mahāmatā anī-  
kaṭṭhā dovārikā amaccā parisajjā rājāno bhogiyā kumārā.*

<sup>371</sup> *Abhejja, parisō hoti, abhejjā'ssa honti parisā, bhikkhū bhikkhuniyo upāsakā upāsikāyo devā manussā asurā  
nāgā gandhabbā. Buddho samāno idam labhati.*

<sup>372</sup> See VvA 347.

<sup>373</sup> So Be Ke; Be vl sugiraṃ; Ee ciram;

<sup>374</sup> From "having given up abusive speech,..." onwards: *pharusam vācam pahāya pharusāya vācāya paṭivirato  
ahosi. Yā sā vācā nelā kaṇṇa, sukhā pemaṇiyā haday'āṅgamā porī bahu, jana, kantā bahu, jana, manāpā, tathā, rūpim  
vācam bhāsītā ahosi.* This is stock, found eg in all the first 13 suttas of Dīgha, eg **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2.44/1:64) =  
SD 8.10.

**2.23.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are the seven jewels, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**2. 23.2** As a king, what does he get?

His words are respected by others. His words are respected by brahmin householders, market-town-folk and countryfolk, accountants and chief ministers, body-guards, door-keepers, ministers, courtiers, vassals, and royal sons.<sup>377</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**2.23.3** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**2.23.4** As the Buddha, what does he get? [174]

His words are respected by others. His words are respected by monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, gods, humans, nagas and gandharvas.<sup>378</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

**2.24** In this matter, this was said:

1 *Akkosa, bhaṇḍana, vihesa, kārim  
ubbādhikam̐ bahu, jana-p, pamaddanam̐  
abāḷham̐ giram̐ so na bhaṇi pharusam̐  
madhuram̐ bhaṇi susamhitam̐ sa, khilam̐*

He worked no anger, nor quarrel, nor harm,  
that afflicted and crushed the masses.  
never strong in words, he spoke not harshly,  
his words were sweet, well put, congenial.

2 *Manaso piyā hadaya, gāminiyo  
vācā so erayati kaṇṇa, sukhā  
vācā, suciṇṇa, phalam̐ anubhavi  
saggesu vedayatha puñña, phalam̐*

Pleasant to the mind, going right to the heart,  
he uttered words soothing to the ear.  
He enjoyed the fruit of his well spoken words;  
in heaven, tasted the fruits of his merits.

3 *Veditvā so sucaritassa phalam̐  
brahma-s, sar'attam̐ idha-m-ajjhagamā  
jivhāssa hoti vipulā puthulā  
ādeyya, vākya, vacano bhavati*

Having enjoyed the fruits of his goodness,  
he here wins the voice of Brahma;  
a broad tongue of full length is his;  
his speech ever welcome when spoken.

<sup>375</sup> *Pahūta, jivho ca hoti* [§1.2.2(27)]. **Comy** says that his tongue is so flexible that it can touch and stroke either nostril, and so extendable that it can touch and stroke either ear, and so wide that it can cover his forehead (DA 2:-450 ≈ MA 3:382; DA 3:938 f): **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3) records the Buddha as exhibiting this (D 3.12/1:106). **Lalita, vis-tara** says that this mark is gained through abandoning wrong speech, praising the disciples, pratyeka buddhas, and Buddhas, by requesting them to teach sutras, and by reciting [learning] the sutras himself (Lalv ed Vaidya 1958: 310). **Carika Saṃhita** says that an ideally healthy tongue is long wide, smooth, slender and pink tongue; and other desirable qualities are a deep and mighty voice, large jaw, wide and rounded chest, and an inconspicuous spine and collar bone (3.1172). See Powers 2009:14 f.

<sup>376</sup> *Brahma-s, saro ca karavika, bhāṇī* [§1.2.2(28)]. **Attha, sālinī** says that “his lips close well, his mouth opens smoothly, his tongue is soft, his voice is sweet, his delivery is lightly rapid (*dant'āvaraṇam̐ suphusitam̐ mukh'ādā-nam̐ siliṭṭham̐ jivhā mudukā saro madhuro vacanam̐ lahu, parivattam̐*). As such, he is able to give a long discourse in a short time. (DhsA 15). DA 2:451 ≈ MA 3:382; DA 3:923-925.

<sup>377</sup> *Ādeyya, vāco hoti, ādiyanti'ssa vacanam̐ brāhmaṇa, gahapatikā negama, jānapadā gaṇaka, mahāmattā anīkaṭṭhā dovārikā amaccā pārisajjā rājāno bhogiyā kumārā.*

<sup>378</sup> *Ādeyya, vāco hoti, ādiyanti'ssa vacanam̐ bhikkhū bhikkhuniyo upāsakā upāsikāyo devā manussā asurā nāgā gandhabbā.*



- 4 *Gihino 'pi ijjhati yathā bhaṇato  
atha ce pabbajati so manujo [175]  
ādiyanti 'ssa vacanaṃ janatā  
bahuno bahum subhaṇitam bhaṇato 'ti* Even as a house-dweller, he prospers from speech,  
but if goes forth, he is a man  
whose words the people heed,  
good in many ways is his well-spoken speech to  
the many.

### (19) A jaw like a lion's (The 22<sup>nd</sup> mark)

**2.25.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata, having given up idle chatter, he abstained from idle chatter. He spoke in season, spoke what was true, what was beneficial]. He spoke on the Teaching [the Dharma] and the Discipline [Vinaya]. He spoke words worth treasuring, seasonable, backed by reason, measured, connected with the goal.<sup>379</sup>

**2.25.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains this mark of the great man:

#### **2.25.3 A jaw like a lion's.**<sup>380</sup>

**2.26.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

#### **2.26.2 As a king**, what does he get?

He cannot be overcome by any enemy or adversary in human form.<sup>381</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**2.26.3** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

#### **2.26.4 As the Buddha**, what does he get?

He cannot be overcome, internally or externally, on account of greed, or hate, or delusion, by any enemy or adversary, nor by any recluse or brahmin, Māra or Brahmā, or by anyone in the world.<sup>382</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

#### **2.27** In this matter, this was said:

- 1 *Na samphappalāpaṃ na muddhatam<sup>383</sup>  
avikiṇṇa, vacana, vyappatho ahoṣi  
ahitam api ca apanudī  
hitam api ca bahu, jana sukhañ ca abhaṇi [176]* Neither useless prattle nor foolish talk,  
in his speech, he was never loose;  
what was unhelpful he pushed away,  
he spoke only good and happiness for the many.

<sup>379</sup> From "having given up idle chatter,..." onwards: *samphappalāpaṃ pahāya samphappalāpā paṭivirato ahoṣi kāla, vādī bhūta, vādī attha, vādī dhamma, vādī vinaya, vādī, nidhāna, vatim vācam bhāsītā ahoṣi kālena sāpadesam pariyanta, vatim attha, samhitam.*

<sup>380</sup> **Sṭha, hanu** [§1.2.2(22)]. His lower jaw is fuller than the upper (DA 2:450 ≈ MA 3:381; DA 3:939 f).

<sup>381</sup> *Appadhamāsiyo hoti kenaci manussa, bhūtena paccatthikena paccā, mittena.*

<sup>382</sup> *Appadhamāsiyo hoti abbhantarehi vā bāhirehi vā paccatthikehi paccā, mittehi, rāgena vā dosena vā mohena vā samaṇena vā brāhmaṇena vā devena vā mārena vā brahmunā vā kenaci vā lokasmim.*

<sup>383</sup> So Be Ee; Ce *samphappalāpaṃ na abuddha, tantim*, "useless speech is not a Buddha's lineage."

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 2 <i>Tam katvā ito cuto divam upapajji<br/>sukata,phala,vipākam anubhosi<br/>caviya punar-idh'āgato samāno<br/>dvidu,gama,varatara,hanu'ttama,lattha</i>          | When his time was done, he was born in heaven,<br>where he enjoyed the fruit of his work well done.<br>Falling away, he returns here,<br>gaining the supremely noble jaw amongst the<br>two-legged. |
| 3 <i>Rājā hoti suduppadhamsiyo<br/>manuj'indo manujādhipati mahā'nubhāvo<br/>tidiva,pura,vara,samo bhavati<br/>sura,vara,taro-r-iva indo</i>                      | He is a king, unassailable,<br>leader of men, lord of humans, great in majesty,<br>he is equal to the best in the noble city of<br>the Thirty-three, like the divinely noble Indra.                 |
| 4 <i>Gandhabb'āsura,yakkha,rakkhasebhi<br/>surehi na hi bhavati suppadhamsiyo<br/>tathatto yadi bhavati tathā,vidho<br/>idha disā ca paṭidisā ca vidisā cā'ti</i> | Not by gandharvas, asuras, yakshas, rakshasas,<br>nor gods is he ever defeated,<br>such will he be, in various ways,<br>here, in the various quarters and in between.                               |

### (20) Even and bright teeth (The 24<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> marks)

**2.28.1** Bhikshus, in whatever past birth, past existence, past abode, in a human form, the Tathagata, having given up wrong livelihood, earned a living through right livelihood, abstaining from cheating with scales, or with metals, or with measures; from bribery, deceit and fraud; from knifing others [cutting them], from murder, from binding others up, from highway robbery, from pillaging and from using force.<sup>384</sup>

**2.28.2** THE DIVINE REFRAIN. *On account of doing, accumulating and increasing these karma, [177] after death, with the body's breaking up, he was reborn in a happy destination, in heaven. There, he surpassed other devas in these ten states, that is, by way of divine life-span, divine beauty, divine joy, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine smell, divine taste, and divine touch.*

Having fallen from that state, coming to arise in the present existence, he obtains these two marks of the great man:

**2.28.3** **Even teeth and large and brilliantly white teeth.**<sup>385</sup>

**2.29.1** THE WHEEL-TURNER REFRAIN. *On account of his being endowed with this mark, if he remains living a house-life, he becomes a wheel-turner [universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of the seven jewels.*

*These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:*

*the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.*

*More than a thousand sons will be his, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.*

*He dwells over this earth, bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.*

**2.29.2** As a king, what does he get?

His entourage is pure. His pure entourage comprises brahmin householders, market-townfolk and countryfolk, accountants and chief ministers, body-guards, door-keepers, ministers, courtiers, vassals, and royal sons.<sup>386</sup> This is what he gets as a king.

**2.30.1** THE BUDDHA REFRAIN. *However, if he were to leave the house for the homeless life, he becomes the arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, rolling back the veil in the world.*

**2.30.2** As **the Buddha**, what does he get?

<sup>384</sup> From “having given up wrong livelihood,...” onward: *micchājīvaṃ pahāya sammā,ājīvena jīvikāṃ kappesi, tulā.kūṭa,kāṃsa.kūṭa,māna.kūṭa,ukkoṭana,vañcana,nikatisāci,yoga,chedana,vadha,bandhana,viparāmosa,ālopa,-sahas'ākārā paṭivirato ahoṣi*. This sentence is found only here (a hapax legomenon).

<sup>385</sup> *Sama,danto ca hoti* [§1.2.2(24)] *susukka,dāṭho ca* [§1.2.2(26)]. DA 2:450 ≈ MA 3:381; DA 3:940 f.

<sup>386</sup> *Suci,parivāro hoti suci'ssa honti parivārā brāhmaṇa,gahapatikā negama,jānapadā gaṇaka,mahāmatṭā anīkaṭ-thā dovārikā amaccā pārisajjā rājāno bhogiyā kumārā*.

His followers are pure. His pure followers are monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, devas, humans, asuras, nagas, and gandharvas.<sup>387</sup> This is what he gets as the Buddha.

The Blessed One spoke on this matter.

2.31 In this matter, this was said:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1 <i>Micchājīvañ ca avassaji samena vuttim<br/>sucinā so janayittha dhammikenā [178]<br/>ahitam api ca apanudi<br/>hitam api ca bahujana, sukhañ ca acari</i></p>                        | <p>Giving up wrong livelihood, practising harmony,<br/>he lived with purity and justice.<br/>What was unhelpful he pushed away,<br/>he lived for the good and happiness of the many.</p>                                    |
| <p>2 <i>Sagge vedayati naro sukha-p, phalāni<br/>karitvā nipuṇebhi vidūhi sabbhi<br/><br/>vaṇṇitāni tidiva, puravara, samo<br/>abhiramati rati, khiḍḍā, samaṅgī</i></p>                     | <p>The man enjoyed happiness' fruit in heaven,<br/>having done what was praised by the skillful,<br/>virtuous and wise.<br/>Equal to the best in the city of the Thirty-three,<br/>he delighted, sporting so joyfully.</p>  |
| <p>3 <i>Laddhāna mānusakam bhavam tato<br/>cavitvāna sukata, phala, vipākam<br/>sesakena paṭilabhati lapanajam<br/>samam api suci, susukkam<sup>388</sup></i></p>                           | <p>Then, obtaining a human life,<br/>falling away due to his well done karmic fruit's<br/>remains, he gets teeth,<br/>even and gleaming white, too.</p>   |
| <p>4 <i>Tam veyyañjanikā samāgatā bahavo<br/>vyākamsu nipuṇa, sammatā manujā<br/>suci, jana, parivāra, gaṇo bhavati<br/>dija, sama, sukka, suci, sobhana, danto</i></p>                     | <p>The many sooth-sayers who have gathered<br/>forecast that the accomplished elect amongst men<br/>will have a following of pure people—<br/>the twice-born with even, white, pure, beautiful<br/>teeth.<sup>389</sup></p> |
| <p>5 <i>Raṇṇo hoti bahu, jano suci, parivāro<br/>mahatim mahim anusāsato [179]<br/>pasayha na ca janapada, tudanam<br/>hitam api ca bahu, jana, sukhañ ca caranti</i></p>                   | <p>For the rajah, there is a following of pure people,<br/>ruling the great earth.<br/>Neither oppressing nor hurting the country,<br/>he lives for the good and happiness of the many.</p>                                 |
| <p>6 <i>Atha ce pabbajati bhavati vipāpo<br/>samaṇo samita, rajo vivaṭṭa-c, chado<br/>vigata, daratha, kilamatho<br/>imam api ca param api ca passati lokam</i></p>                         | <p>But if he goes forth, he will be free from evil,<br/>a recluse, dust-settled, the veil rolled back,<br/>weariness and stress<sup>390</sup> all gone,<br/>for he sees both this world and the next.</p>                   |
| <p>7 <i>Tass'ovāda, karā bahu, gihī ca pabbajitā ca<br/>asucim garahitam dhunanti pāpaṃ<br/>sa hi sucibhi parivuto bhavati<br/>mala, khila, kali, kilese panudehī'ti.<sup>391</sup></i></p> | <p>Many householders and renunciants, on his advice,<br/>shake off evil, impure and blameworthy.<br/>For, he is surrounded by the pure,<br/>who push away defilements that stain, barren and<br/>luckless!"</p>             |

<sup>387</sup> *Suci, parivāro hoti, suci'ssa honti parivārā, bhikkhū bhikkhuniyo upāsakā upāsikāyo devā manussā asurā nāgā gandhabbā.*

<sup>388</sup> So Be Ce; Ee *samam api suvisuddham suvisukkam*; Se *Samam api ca suvisuddha susukam*.

<sup>389</sup> RD renders the prec and this ll as "Pure will the folk around him be | Whose teeth so even, bright and pure," taking *dija* ("twice-born") as meaning "bird" (first the egg, and the breaking out of it) and *danto* as "teeth," but which then should be neuter here as *dantam*. D:W folls RD.

<sup>390</sup> *Daratha* occurs as *daratha, ja* ("stress-born") at Sn 15a, where Comy explains *daratha* as referring to the initial arising of stress on account of "fever" (*pariḷaha*), ie lust, and the stress that tires one, ie, it arises (*daratha, ja*) from the stress itself (SnA 2:24,15).

[2.32 The Blessed One said this. The monks joyful approved of the Blessed One's word.]<sup>392</sup>

— evaṃ —

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<sup>391</sup> So Be; Ee Ce Se DA *panudeti*. Se (whole verse): *tass'ovāda, karā bahu, gihī ca | pabbajitā ca asuci, vigarahita | panudi, pāpassa hi sucibhi, parivuto | bhavati mala, khilaka, kilese panudeti*.

<sup>392</sup> Only in Ee, Ke.

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